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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

FOURTH QUARTER - - 1960

Special Issue on Colportage

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Editorial

COLPORTAGE HAS BEEN a recurring subject in the pages of the *Bulletin*. Once more in this issue we turn our attention to this fundamental method of encouraging and indeed securing the wider circulation of the Word of God. Most of the articles describe the work in countries from which no report on the subject has yet appeared in the *Bulletin*. In some cases, as in the articles on Japan and Argentina, or in the notes by Dr. S. Nelson, we are acquainted with the latest developments in the field of colportage. But underlying all this we can detect in these reports signs of the new concern which is increasingly occupying the minds of Bible Society leaders.

Colportage work in its traditional form was at its peak during the first fifteen years of this century. At that time, the Bible Societies were employing several thousands of colporteurs. Two world wars, an anti-religious régime extending over one-third of the human race, various economic difficulties, have been among the external causes which have led to the decline. More insidious, but no less powerful, was a certain hesitancy which developed, more or less consciously, among the Bible Societies themselves. Used by many groups and sects to disseminate their own teachings, colportage became somewhat discredited. Colportage methods were being perverted and sales often undercut by the increasing number of free mass-distribution campaigns. The churches, on the other hand, were complaining that the work of the colporteurs was insufficiently related to their own activities, that many of the colporteurs belonged to "sectarian" groups and were encouraging people to join a "sect" rather than the historical Church. Moreover, the whole Christian outlook became more "church-minded" than it had been for a hundred years; independent activities were often disapproved in a theology increasingly conscious of the importance of the Church as a visible organisation. Being within the Church's mission, colportage was to be a matter for the Church and not for independent agencies. The theological validity of such statements was widely accepted within the Bible Societies themselves. They came to realise more and more that they were part of the Church and that their work within the Church had to be done in as close and as active cooperation with the churches as possible. Indeed, some thought that the time was coming when the churches themselves could be left to assume alone the responsibility of the missionary circulation of the Scriptures, the Bible Societies sending their colporteurs only into areas where the churches had no access or were too weakly established.

In the last ten years these problems have constantly been in the mind of Bible Society leaders in all countries. The wrestling is not yet over, but certain outlines are beginning slowly to emerge out of this long period of self-criticism and searching. They are reflected in some of the following articles.

Basically, there is a growing renewal of confidence in colportage. To be sure, the conditions are no longer what they were fifty years ago. Everything wants speeding up. Bicycles, cars, vans, possibly visual aids, Bible leaflets and booklets to be distributed free on each visit—these are the recognised tools of

the colporteur in many areas. He also needs better training. People all over the world have become scientifically minded (even if it is only through science-fiction and the type of commonplace science popularised by rudimentary marxism!); they learn about world politics ; they become culturally self-conscious ; in a word—they ask questions. The colporteurs must know the questions and the influences which prompt them. They need adequate preparation. The quest for syllabuses, appropriate material, methods of training, is world-wide today among the Bible Societies. Recognising this, the Council of the U.B.S. agreed in Grenoble last May that background material and outline methods should be gathered, compiled and sent out for the benefit and use of all Societies. Work has already started on this.

Moreover, colporteurs' work must be keyed in more satisfactorily, at a local level, with the missionary activities of the Church. The colporteurs' work thus becomes more effective ; the Church's evangelistic ministry is enhanced. The pastor, instead of looking upon the coming of a colporteur into his area with misgiving, must be encouraged to see in him an ally and to treat him as such. Thus the colporteur's work is not carried out in a void but is related to an on-going process.

As a matter of fact, there seems to be dawning a possibility (or is it only wishful thinking still ?) that churches in other places than Latin America and some other privileged areas are beginning to pay more genuine attention to the evangelistic potentialities of missionary Scripture distribution. Some now appear inclined to experiment themselves with Scripture distribution projects and to adopt as part of their own activity a method of evangelism which so far has been the unwilling monopoly of the Bible Societies and of some other Scripture distribution agencies, or the alleged pet theories of odd evangelical free-lancers. Here and there we see colporteurs invited to a city or an area not only in order to go from door to door, but to organise, or help in a campaign of visitation and Scripture distribution undertaken by the local church itself. Such cases are still relatively rare. But it would seem as if the seed patiently sown and tended by the Bible Society secretaries might now be yielding its first-fruits. And what a tremendous opportunity this would be ! The Word being spread widely ; the *laos* (people) of the Church at last waking out of its lethargy ; the ministry of all believers at last becoming a reality ; the Church recovering its early missionary dynamic . . . . . .

Finally—and this is closely connected to what has just been said—there is the growing recognition that one cannot be content just to circulate millions of Gospels. Responsible stewardship implies for the Bible Societies a concern for the use that is being made of these millions of Scripture portions : Are they being read ? Is there any need for "first-aid" to ease the contact between that strange book and the man of today ? The method now being tried as an experiment in Latin America, where a second visit is paid to homes where a Scripture portion was purchased, is paramount. Wherever Bible Societies and churches stand and work in close cooperation, this is possible, and a Philip can go and ask : "Understandest thou what thou readest ?" But there are many other areas where such cooperation has not yet been achieved. What can be done ? Brief "Introductions to the Scriptures", correspondence courses, glossaries and other methods of initiation are now being used experimentally in various places. Yet it is still too early to form an objective judgment on the possibilities thus offered. Nevertheless, one thing is clear. All such means will never take the

place of the living witness of man to man. Philip not only explained the Scriptures to the Ethiopian eunuch, he witnessed to his Lord, and thus gave him the key. It is part of the very nature of the Bible Societies, that they must keep on challenging the Church to stimulate and send out such witnesses, to water and raise the seed.

Dr. Platt in a different setting stresses in the following pages that close connection between the Bible and the evangelistic-missionary dimension of the Church. And it is significant in that perspective that in the forthcoming weeks the Standing Committee of the U.B.S. will have to consider a proposal for joint work adopted by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches by which the W.C.C. and the U.B.S. would cooperate in a study on the use of the Bible for which the following general lines of inquiry are suggested :

> The place of the Bible in evangelism, both as a means of evangelism and a source of inspiration and motivation for it ; the effect of the use of the Bible in the Christian encounter with those estranged from, or on the fringe of the Church, and with non-Christians, including adherents of other religions ; and the way in which the Holy Scripture can best be utilised in present-day circumstances as a means of furthering the evangelistic and missionary work of the Church.

At a time when colportage, in a more elaborate form, again becomes a major concern of the Bible Societies, it is a sign of hope and an encouragement to find the churches themselves desirous to look more fully into the matter of the use of the Bible in evangelism. Out of this convergence a new age could begin for the witness of the Church of Jesus Christ in our world.

O. B.

EUROPE

Team-work in Belgium

P. Caufriez

SIX YEARS AGO, thanks particularly to the help of the American Bible Society, the Belgian Bible Society was able to develop its colportage work on a scale unknown in previous years. First, it became possible to increase the number of colporteurs to twelve. Secondly, all these colporteurs could be supplied with a small car which would enable them, it was reckoned, to save an average of two hours a day previously spent waiting for public transport. Thirdly, regular one-day meetings could be organised for the colporteurs, six to eight times a year. There personal problems could be discussed, fellowship strengthened, an esprit de corps deepened and a certain amount of training could be given. Sometimes the colporteurs' wives could also be invited. Furthermore there are the annual retreats for colporteurs held in cooperation with colleagues from France, on which the *Bulletin* has reported on several occasions. The last retreat of this kind took place in July in Switzerland. For the first time the gathering was also attended by the colporteurs' wives. Some of our colporteurs were also able to attend the training course set up in Geneva during the winter of 1956-57, and this too helped considerably to strengthen and deepen the missionary zeal of those who attended. Thus the whole body of our colporteurs has grown stronger and more united over the years.

Since this team of missionaries was able to move about easily from place to place, it was decided to organise their work in sectors. Our desire was that every house in Belgium, even in the most isolated hamlets, should all be visited. Every colporteur therefore received a very exact programme of the area to be covered by him. Each month they send in a detailed report of their day-to-day activity. They are left free to follow their own personal methods in the carrying out of their work. Some, who have easy routes to cover, visit their area according to a systematic plan, from one end of the year to the other. Others decide to wait for good weather before undertaking long journeys. Yet others seek God's precise guidance each morning for the work of the day. Thus they all adjust their activity according to inclination, health, character, family situation, or quite simply so as to fit in with market day in this town or that.

Generally speaking the colporteurs return home each day. Their timetable varies according to the place where they work : certain communes, for instance, forbid colportage work after dark. In other places it is better to visit cafés in the evening. On the whole, it is not found to be a very good idea to knock on people's doors before nine o'clock in the morning, although it is always essential to rent a place on the market square in good time. Occasionally some of the colporteurs go off on two or three day tours, lodging with friends or in an hotel. The Italian colporteur visits the four mining areas each month. He often has to go away for a week at a time because of the distances involved. This is sometimes the case also for the colporteur in Luxembourg. It has happened that one or two of our colporteurs, accompanied by volunteers, have used the Bible Society lorry as a caravan during a 15-day tour. At the time of special colportage campaigns at the seaside, another colporteur rented an apartment near the beach for himself, his wife and children : in this instance his family worked with him.

The fact that he has a motor-car often enables a Bible missionary to take voluntary colporteurs with him for a day. Campaigns organised by the churches sometimes take place with the help of our minibus, in which it is possible to transport groups of Christians.

Belgian colporteurs are requested to take care of their personal appearance and to seek the best ways of introducing themselves. Some of them do not use a briefcase for fear of giving the impression of being undesirable travelling-salesmen. These keep some books in their pockets and the rest in the van, on which there is no inscription of any kind, so as to avoid arousing the attention of the village. Another man, on the contrary, brief-case slung across his back, is regularly mistaken for a gas fitter. On the other hand, on wet days when he goes armed with a black umbrella, it is less easy for him to effect entry because of his priest-like appearance !

One of the men will go into a village and first visit the priest ; another visits the priest last of all. One colporteur has, for some months now, been using the following method of offering a Gospel : "I have come to offer you a small present". He is then admitted into the house, where it is easier to carry on a conversation than it is on the doorstep—a conversation which often ends in a sale. Another worker systematically gives away Bible portions as samples, on principle selling only Bibles. On the other hand yet another sells only Gospels and calls again at the same houses a year later, in order to sell New Testaments. One of the colporteurs returns to the houses where he has sold a Bible, taking with him a tape-recorder by means of which the family can hear a short Bible study prepared by the pastor of the area. When one or several families show interest, other colporteurs themselves give introductory Bible studies which help people to tackle with greater ease their reading of the Bible. Generally speaking, the sale of Holy Scriptures from door to door necessitates long conversations to explain that it is the Bible that is being offered and that it is useful to possess it.

When working in market places, our colporteurs make use either of a table furnished with publicity material, or a small bookstand which is attached to the side of their van, or a small canvas kiosk. Whether the men choose door-to-door colportage or visits to market places, depends on the amount of success they achieve with either of these two methods.

The monthly salary received by Bible missionaries is only a bare minimum, and it is certainly insufficient for those with several children. Salaries are, however, supplemented by a 25% rebate on sales. Travelling expenses are reimbursed according to the mileage covered. The Bible Society also grants a discount of 25% to a few voluntary colporteurs (mostly retired people) in order to cover their travelling expenses. From this year the Society has, in addition, decided to pay a modest salary to those who are to become pastors and evangelists and who agree to carry out a period of six months' probation in colportage work. In addition, travel expenses and a commission on sales are being granted to one of the Society's former colporteurs who has recently been appointed to do this work for a church, the latter being responsible for his salary.

Colportage work in Belgium is very costly because of the time involved in carrying on long conversations with the people who are contacted. The sale of a 75 Fr. Bible or a 1.25 Fr. Gospel, for instance, can cost the Society as much as 40 or 50 Frs. in salary, travel and other costs.

The Belgian Bible Society's activities also extend into other spheres : the publication and despatch of Scriptures within Belgium and abroad, Bible exhibitions, Bible stands at trade fairs, church conferences, participation in joint ventures with the French Bible Society and the Swiss Bible Society (notably retreats for colporteurs, the colportage manual, a joint catalogue, etc.).

The organisation of the work is undertaken by a General Secretary who is aided byan Assistant General Secretary with special responsibility for work in Flanders. They are guided and supported in their task by a Council of seven members, which acts as the Executive for a larger General Assembly, on which are representatives of the main denominations and areas of the country.

The use of the Bible van in the Netherlands

based on notes provided by a staff member of the Netherlands Bible Society

BIBLE COLPORTAGE in the Netherlands is done through periodical visits by two colportage vans to different parts of the country, according to a schedule prepared several months ahead. These colportage vans are run by five colporteurs, two for each van and one for general reserve.

Courses for the training of these colporteurs are not given in Holland. In appointing colporteurs our Society tries to find active Christians, users of the Bible and with a fairly profound Bible knowledge. Moreover they should have a thorough knowledge of the lay-out of the churches in the country, whilst at the same time they should be tactful, resourceful and with an easy approach to the general public.

The five colporteurs now functioning on the two Bible vans are from different categories. One of them has completed his theological studies ; the second one was trained at a Bible school abroad ; the third worked originally as an evangelist ; the last two were, at the time of their appointment, without specialised training for the job. These five colporteurs, who are full-time workers for the N.B.S., receive their instructions from two quarters. For the evangelical part of their task they are instructed by our Secretary for Contacts with the Churches. As regards sales policy, they receive advice from the leaders of the Sales Department of the N.B.S. There is no written syllabus for them, since on the one hand the general education of our colporteurs differs very much, and on the other hand the instruction given by our secretaries is such live material that a syllabus is felt to be too rigid for the vocational training of such different elements. These combined instructions aim at impressing the colporteurs with the fact that the work is not finished with the sale of a Bible, but that an evangelistic or missionary follow-up, as regards both the good use of the Bible and the closer contact with the churches, is essential.

The work of the Bible vans and the planning of their tours is always arranged in close cooperation with the Boards of the local branches of the Netherlands Bible Society, of which there are more than 800. It is our aim that local col-

portage should be undertaken on the broadest possible basis from the ecumenical point of view. Therefore the collaboration of the greatest number of different denominational voluntary workers is sought. During preparation for a visit by a Bible van to a certain town or village, the N.B.S. workers try to obtain the widest possible cooperation of the local clergy and churches, since experience has proved that the best results are always obtained if Bible van colportage is also a cooperative enterprise of N.B.S. workers, voluntary assistants, local clergy and churches. The part played by the local clergy is extremely important because Bible colportage is not a sales stunt, but a means to bring the Word also to those who are at present unfamiliar with it and who by suitable after-care and follow-up on the part of the local pastor concerned may learn to love it.

As often as possible the visit of a colportage van to a certain part of a town or community coincides with other projects taking place in the same area, such as general propaganda to increase N.B.S. membership locally, although this is not always feasible.

Before the Bible van arrives in a village, its visit is announced by the distribution on the spot of posters, giving the dates and places where the Bible van will be stationed, by notices in evangelical papers and by announcement from the pulpit.

(*a*) The voluntary assistants who are invited to help the full-time colporteurs locally are given certain instructions so that their assistance can be most fruitful. They are generally initiated in the general work of the N.B.S. They learn about its set-up, they are made aware of the N.B.S. work of translating, printing, publishing and distributing the Bible, not only in Holland, but also in the different fields where the N.B.S. has a task. They learn that such a task exists not only in New Guinea, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, but also in relation to Indonesia and Hong Kong, and in Cameroun, where the N.B.S. quite recently established an agency in co-operation with the B.F.B.S.

(*b*) These instructions also are not written, but are based on the experience of the full-time colporteurs and on the guiding principles which they have received from the Secretary for Contacts with the Churches and from the Manager of the Sales Department. Emphasis is placed on the fact that our colportage is meant to bring the Word not as a sales stunt, but for missionary purposes. And a very important part of their instructions consists of the request that they should report either to the full-time colporteurs or to the local clergy on the contacts which they make during their door-to-door visits, in order mainly to provide the local clergy with details necessary for the follow-up of the colportage work in the shape of after-care, which it is hoped will lead to better contact with the Church and a better use of the Bible.

For their rounds in town or village, the voluntary assistants are provided with a small but well chosen collection of the most popular N.B.S. editions. Moreover they invite the public to visit the Bible van personally if their first contact has no immediate results.

The colporteurs are also free to accept gifts for the organisation or application forms for membership of the N.B.S.

The N.B.S. is considering whether colportage work in Holland could not be promoted by house-to-house distribution of folders before a Bible van visits a certain quarter, in order to announce its arrival. And it is felt important that

both full-time colporteurs and voluntary assistants should have at their disposal some printed material which they can leave behind on their door-to-door visits in the cases where no immediate purchase results from their calls.

On the average each Bible van, which is on the road for more than 40 weeks a year, sells more than f.1,000 worth of Scriptures per week. Since the N.B.S. started this work six years ago sales have risen rather rapidly. The figures were :

1955	f. 60,000
1956	f. 89,000
1957	f. 92,000
1958	f.100,000
1959	f.112,000

A breakdown of this figure shows that two colportage vans sold in 1959 around 6,000 Bibles, including 1,800 children's Bibles, and 7,000 portions. The yearly sale of New Testaments remains surprisingly low for each Bible van : the first one selling only 200, the second distributing only 250 Testaments per year. Apart from the editions published by the N.B.S. both vans sell and carry a rather large quantity of psalms and hymn books, produced by other publishers in the Netherlands.

Informal training in Greece

G. Kladis

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SCRIPTURES in Greece is mainly effected through two channels : the depot and colporteurs. There is very little being done through "correspondents" properly so called. The purpose of this short article is to give the reader a few of the aspects of colportage work in Greece.

We have altogether seven colporteurs working in this country at the present time. They are placed in central parts, or what may be called strategic positions, of the country, and in this way we manage to visit pretty frequently most parts of the mainland and the islands, the most important towns and villages at any rate. One, or perhaps two, additional men would no doubt enable us to visit certain areas of the country, especially islands, more frequently, but apart from the question of expense involved, it is by no means an easy matter to find proper men willing to work as colporteurs. A man, for instance, who has graduated from the Gymnasium and is willing to make colportage his profession would be hard to find. We have as a rule, therefore, to be content with men of by no means good education and, in several cases, with men who have been brought up in small provincial towns, where their religious instruction has been very meagre indeed. Nevertheless, we are glad to say that we have a team of men who have colportage work really at heart. One need hardly emphasise how important that is in a work like ours, having regard particularly to the hardships involved and the temptation we all as human beings have to take everything more easily.

Every care is taken to engage as colporteurs men devoted to the cause of Christ and earnestly desiring to work for the propagation of the Word of God among their countrymen. In almost all cases, before a man starts colportage, he is brought to the depot in Athens for about three months so that he may

learn something of our work and get all the necessary instructions. After he gets some experience by working on his own, we send him to work for about a month in the company of a more experienced colporteur. This has been of great help to one or two of our colporteurs. The only other training—if it may be called training—that our colporteurs have so far been getting is what they learn from experience, at discussions we have when we meet them and, more especially, during colporteurs' conferences when a discussion of our work and an exchange of views has been found to be very helpful and instructive.

It may easily be inferred from what is said above, that it is rather difficult to give proper training to men in this country for colportage work. Such men as are available for this work know neither English nor French and could not, therefore, be sent to a school abroad in order to get the proper training. The fact that, owing to religious conditions prevailing in this country, a man would often find it difficult, if not impossible, to put into effect what he had been taught, is something which should also be borne in mind when considering the training of Greek colporteurs. In the absence of proper local training centres there is nothing we can think of as affording a sort of spiritual equipment to our men under present conditions than to bring them from time to time, and one or two at a time, to Athens for a period of, say, three to six months, during which time they could easily be engaged in some colportage work in Athens and the surrounding district. An occasional visit of such a kind would certainly have the effect of re-equipping them through the opportunity it would give us to see them over a prolonged period of time and discuss their work with them, while the opportunity they would also have of attending the services in the Athens churches and meeting with Christians would be of no small benefit to them spiritually. But that again is easier said than done, since they cannot be expected to be away from they families for very long. The fact also that there is always so much to do in each one's territory is something which has in the past made us feel a little disinclined to take a colporteur away from his work even for a short time.

These are the factors to be borne in mind in considering the question of training colporteurs as far as this country is concerned. The question is of the utmost importance and we are very glad indeed that the Bible Societies are now giving it the place it should have. To train colporteurs to do their work effectively should be among the most important matters to engage the attention of Bible Societies as long as colportage still forms such an important part in the distribution of the Scriptures. Though our own colporteurs may not be able to benefit from training given in other countries—not for some time, at any rate—we are yet looking forward to receiving copies of any relative material to be printed which we could use for their benefit.

While on the question of devising means to make colportage more effective, it would not probably be out of place for us to mention that for many years now our colporteurs are supplied with a four-page leaflet on the Bible which they distribute free to all they contact, whether a sale is effected or not. The first two pages of this leaflet are usually taken up by general information on the Bible, on the third page opinions of great men are given, followed by a list of subjects to be looked up in the Bible, while the last page usually contains a price list of the main editions of Greek Scriptures. Such a leaflet has been found very useful and our colporteurs have got so accustomed to it that they would not now think of working without it. We often receive requests for a supply of these leaflets from friends for free distribution.

"Commando campaigns" in Japan

Tsunetaro Miyakoda

FIVE YEARS AGO the *Bulletin** published an article on the organisation of colportage in Japan. There we reported on the three types of colporteurs at work in Japan : full-time colporteurs employed by the Bible Society ; part-time colporteurs working on a commission basis ; full-time colporteurs employed by churches and missions. Since then, this pattern has hardly changed at all. In our previous article we also referred to our first experiences in team colportage. We had begun to organise what we called "commando campaigns" by sending teams of four or eight colporteurs to work systematically through a city or an area. In view of the satisfactory results of the first experiments the method was extended and the best part of the activity of our full-time colporteurs is now organised in teams.

There is significance in the fact that our Lord sent out his disciples in teams of two. Experience has taught us that colporteurs working alone, whether full-time or part-time, are not successful. The colporteur is only human ; to carry on his work by himself is a lonely and hard task. Some men become idle or listless. They need a comrade who gives companionship and encouragement, a friend with whom to talk over the task and its difficulties. We found, however, that a team of two was insufficient, and three unworkable because often two will "side" against one. Hence we have developed, after years of experience, a team with four members.

We have not yet reached the stage when the team elect a leader amongst themselves. At present we appoint, from among the more experienced colporteurs, a man known for his sound Christian and church principles and then assign to his team three members who are deemed to be cooperative. A man who is a good leader of one team may not be satisfactory for another. When a leader is changed new team members are selected accordingly. This is one of the most arduous tasks the Secretary of the Colportage Department has to face.

The teams on the field

Our colporteurs' work is divided into the following five periods : November-December, January-March, April-May, June-August, September-October. A team carries on its work in a specified area for each period. The areas are assigned at least one month before the teams are due to start their activity there, thus leaving adequate time for consultation with the team leaders. Before that, however, each area is carefully studied by the Colportage Secretary. About three months before the team is due to arrive, he visits the area. There he calls not only on the local churches and ministers, but also on the city officials and police stations, and thus prepares the way for the coming colportage activity. He usually asks the local pastors and missionaries to meet together and requests them to cooperate with the colporteurs' team in their area. The General Secretary often attends these local gatherings which are essential for the smooth and effective work of the colporteurs, and also provide an opportunity

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for fellowship and better understanding between Christians of different denominations. Upon their arrival the colporteurs are welcomed by the churches at a united meeting, and during their stay are frequently invited to a meal at week-ends by the church members and missionaries, who ask them to report on their work. Thus the colporteurs have an opportunity to make a good witness and to stimulate the interest of potential candidates for the work. Local church organisations usually print a list of churches with pastors' and missionaries' addresses and give them to the colporteurs to distribute wherever they think this would be helpful, for instance when they are asked about the location of a church, or when they receive enquiries about Christian teaching.

In each area the colporteurs ask local pastors and key laymen to introduce them to the headmasters of schools, heads of factories and various leaders of local organisations. With the help of such introductions they are generally allowed to visit these places, give brief talks on the Bible and sell Scriptures. Keen Christian industrial leaders often gather their workers in a large hall and ask the colporteurs to talk on the Scriptures. Colporteurs are also frequently given the opportunity to meet with the men and women during their lunch or tea breaks in open yards or a room put at their disposal. According to the 1959 report, our colporteurs succeeded in visiting, and publicly selling Scriptures in about 80% of the factories and schools where they made a request to do so.

The colporteurs follow a definite itinerary through their area, which has been planned beforehand by the Secretary in cooperation with the local ministers. Expenses are limited to Y500 per day (10/-). Sometimes it is difficult to keep within this budget, but once again the problem is solved by the cooperation of local churches and missionaries. A further study is going to be made of the problem of living accommodation and meals (the colporteurs prefer home-cooked food) and we hope to find some satisfactory answer.

The members of the colportage teams are usually away from home for about seven weeks, but never more than ten weeks. Then they are given a fortnight at home before their next period of work.

The Society's Colportage Department tries to choose for the teams men who live near the area where the team will be working, but this is not always easy. At certain times of the year the work is concentrated in the cool areas of the north, while in the winter the teams go to the warmer southern areas of the country. The travelling expenses which this entails are one of the problems the Colportage Department is tackling. We hope in the near future to organise teams centered at Bible Society branches and depots throughout the country, with members from these areas. This will not only reduce travelling expenses, but will also make it possible for team members to return to their homes more frequently that at present.

So far team colportage has been taking place exclusively in rural areas and small cities. Since November 1959, however, an initial experiment has been under way in Yokohama, the fourth largest city in Japan. The town is being systematically visited by a team of six colporteurs. Churches, Y.M.C.A. and Christian schools are being most cooperative. Leading church members not only invite the colporteurs to come to their factories and offices, but also introduce them into other factories and business houses. Presidents and principals of Christian schools introduce them into secular and public schools. Thus our colporteurs can get into many places where otherwise Scripture distribution

would not be allowed. The work in Yokohama is proving much harder than in rural areas. The colporteurs meet fierce opposition on the part of the Soka-gakkai (a new politico-religious sect) ; many free distribution campaigns have already taken place in the city and people are less inclined to buy Scriptures. There is clearly less interest in religious matters in this big industrial port. As the work is to go on for several months a house has been rented for the colporteurs and a Christian woman has been engaged to cook for them.

Though the leader of the campaign in Yokohama, Mr. Kawasaki, remains there all the time in order to ensure continuity in the method and spirit of the work, the team members are changed for each period of colportage. We have also combined study courses with the campaign. Although this has slowed down the distribution somewhat, it makes it possible to give useful additional training to our men.

Life in a colportage team

The team members usually stay at inns, sharing double rooms. They rise at 6 or 6.30 a.m., and at 7 a.m. gather in the leader's room for morning worship. The members take it in turn to lead the short service, consisting of hymn singing, Scripture reading and prayer. Sometimes morning prayers are attended by local pastors and missionaries, or by visitors from headquarters, who are generally asked to address the group. Great emphasis is laid on this 30-minute service as the necessary beginning of the day's work. At 8.30, after breakfast, the colporteurs leave the hotel for their place of work for the day. As a rule two members work together in the same sector. They take their mid-day meal at wayside tea-houses or at private homes. Japanese country houses often serve tea to visitors.

During the lunch-hour at factories and schools and in the market places is the most valuable time for the colporteurs' work. Students, workers and passers-by are attracted by posters and books displayed on a table. As the colporteurs sell their books, they comment on them. It is on such occasions that a two-man team is most valuable, for one colporteur could not deal satisfactorily with several people at once. Usually one colporteur gives a talk on the Bible while the other hands out Scriptures to the people who are sitting or standing round the speaker. An experienced colporteur can sell from 100 to 300 copies of Scripture in this way.

Whenever possible our colporteurs practise this kind of team work in the villages too. By gathering people in the market place, addressing then and selling Scriptures, they prepare the way for their house-to-house visitation.

In house-to-house visitation, which is their main task, the colporteurs sell an average of 150 copies of Scripture a day each. In cities they can sell more, but in villages they may sell only 50 copies or less. At some homes they are asked to stay and speak about the Scriptures and the Christian gospel. On such occasions they return to the homes when their daily work is finished, or ask the enquirers to come to their hotels in the evening. As a result of these meetings, many people are introduced to the churches, or small evangelistic groups are formed. There are not a few churches in Japan which owe their formation to the witness of colporteurs. Tokyo headquarters does not require the colporteurs to use their free time for extra evangelical work, but commends it to them as far as their time and energy permit.

At 5 p.m. the colporteurs return to their hotel, take a bath, change into Japanese dress and take their evening meal together. Usually they go to bed at 9 p.m., after having spent 30 minutes in the writing and discussion of their daily reports; evening prayers led by one of the colporteurs conclude the day.

Contacts with headquarters

The Colportage Secretary keeps in close communication with all the team leaders, through whom he receives daily reports from every member of the teams. These reports are written on special forms which the colporteurs fill in very briefly. A space is provided where they can give their impressions of the day's work or express their ideas on the local situation in which they are working.

The Colportage Secretary gathers information from all the teams and makes reports to the General Secretary. If necessary the colporteurs' completed report forms are attached to the Secretary's report. Occasionally telephone and telegraph communications are used in the case of such emergencies as accidents or sickness.

The Colportage Secretary visits every team at least once during each period of work. He can thus appraise the colporteur's work and welfare and see how his plans have been carried out, perhaps altering them if necessary. He does not cover his circuit all at once, but divides it into three or four trips during the period. He makes detailed reports of these visits to the General Secretary, and also reports every Monday at the prayer meeting of the Bible Society staff and members.

The General Secretary also visits some of the teams each term. He stays one or two days in each place, using the opportunity to call on the ministers and missionaries in the district, and sometimes inviting them to lunch to talk about Bible Society work. If he spends the week-end there he is always invited to preach at churches in the town. The Monday provides an opportunity to attend and address the meeting of ministers from the town and nearby villages. When possible the colporteurs are also invited to take part in these gatherings. Usually the team leader makes arrangements for the General Secretary to speak on the Bible in both public and private schools during his visit. Public schools now treat the Bible as one of the important books of human history.

The training of colporteurs

Our colporteurs are church members who have been recommended by their pastors. We are proud of having such fine Christian workers in our service. They include businessmen, school teachers, ex-soldiers, merchants, farmers, miners, pastors and housewives. But how do we train them to be good colporteurs ?

When we engage a new colporteur, we make him a member of a team and ask the leader and the other members to train him as they work together. As a rule the team leader takes the new man as his room-mate. They live together and go out to work together. The leader shows him how to visit people in their homes and commend the Scriptures to them. Often the Secretary from Tokyo will visit a team where there are new or inexperienced members and train them in the same way.

The time of fellowship in the evening is a good opportunity for new members to receive training from experienced colporteurs, and spiritual education is received in the daily morning worship. Then, at the Tokyo Bible House there

is a library of Christian books which may be borrowed by the colporteurs. The books are in great demand and are read and discussed by the team members as they live and work together on the field.

Colporteurs are also expected to attend local church services on Sunday morning and evening, and sometimes the mid-week prayer meeting. There they receive spiritual refreshment. Their own preaching and witness in the churches gives them an opportunity of reviewing and re-thinking their own work.

Bulletins for colporteurs are published twice a month at the Tokyo Bible House. Articles of help to colporteurs are written by Bible Society staff and other ministers. The colporteurs themselves are encouraged to submit articles on their experiences and their ideas for the work. A weekly Christian newspaper and other publications which are thought to be helpful for the colporteurs are purchased and sent out from Tokyo.

The most important training, however, is provided by the well-prepared annual Colporteurs' Retreat, where for three days the colporteurs hear lectures by highly qualified speakers on various subjects, report on their own work and discuss it together. This retreat is always remembered as a time of great blessing.

Finally, as indicated above, the colporteurs now receive training while working in Yokohama. This is a first step towards the setting up of a training institute which we are hoping to have one day.

Financing colportage

The colporteur's basic salary of Y10,000 (about £10) a month, the commission on sales of Y5 per Gospel portion, and all travelling and hotel expenses, are paid by the Bible Society. As the colporteurs sell an average of 150 copies of Scripture a day, their total income compares favourably with the average Japanese worker of today, and is often more than that of office workers in Tokyo and other cities. As well as this income, the colporteurs receive a gift of almost a month's salary in the summer and at Christmas, according to their work.

We are at the moment trying to decide whether or not it would be wise to give our colporteurs a full fixed salary. This is a problem, for it might well be that, without the incentive of a commission on sales, the average distribution of Scriptures would decrease. At present there are a few colporteurs who cannot sell 150 copies, but there are some who can sell more than 300 copies a day, and circulation has been increasing steadily.

I ought perhaps to point out that our full-time colporteurs are not authorised to sell anything but Scripture portions. Bible and New Testaments are sold through churches and bookshops. There are several reasons for this arrangement. One is purely physical : a colporteur could not carry enough Bibles with him. Another is that we want to preserve the missionary value of colportage work and reach as many people as possible. Still another is that the Japan Bible Society wants to make as much use as possible of the book trade which is very extensive in Japan (there are 10,000 bookshops!) and which provides an excellent means of evangelism. When people turn to a church to buy a Bible or a New Testament, it is also easier to keep in touch with them and help them to understand the message of the Book.

The place of the full-time Colporteur in Korea

C. R. Kenyon

I HAVE BEEN ASKED to give an overall picture of one aspect of the Korean Bible Society's work, that of the full-time, salaried, colporteur. It might be best to do this by considering first the Society's attitude towards colportage today, then describing how colporteurs are chosen and trained, and how their work is organised, and finally reporting briefly on the 1960 Summer Retreat and Training Conference for colporteurs.

Are colporteurs still necessary ?

For the Bible Society in Korea, the date June 23rd was notable in that it marked the completion of the distribution of thirty million Scriptures in Korea. On this same day in the Bible House in Seoul, fifty-eight applicants were being examined and interviewed as prospective salaried colporteurs. This happy coincidence clearly indicates not only that the Bible Society realises the magnitude of the task still to be done, but also it reveals a strong belief in the continuing importance of the colporteur in the overall work of Scripture distribution.

There are seven Christian book-stores and two-hundred and twenty commissioned book stores selling Scriptures in Korea. Last year they sold 26,661 Bibles (about 94% of the total distribution of Bibles in Korea) ; 89,411 New Testaments (57%), and 121,806 portions (23%). At least half of these shops are in the seven major cities, the remainder in large towns. They sell chiefly to believers. Through vast areas of rural Korea, where there are no bookshops of any kind, Scripture distribution must depend on commissioned or salaried colporteurs. Last year, 128 commissioned colporteurs and eight full-time men distributed 354,696 portions (68% of the total distribution) but only 299 New Testaments (1%) and 95 Bibles (0.3%). Comparison of these figures clearly indicates the role of the colporteur today : to distribute especially in rural areas and to introduce unbelievers to the Scriptures.

How colporteurs are chosen

In April and May this year, advertisements were inserted in Christian newspapers inviting applicants for appointment as colporteurs. The examination of these applicants which I mentioned above, was both written and oral, and designed to test their knowledge of the Bible and its teaching and their familiarity with the contents of such books as History of the Korean Bible Society, Mary Jones and her Bible, God's Word in Man's Language and A Book in his Hand. The interviews gave a specially appointed committee an opportunity to decide on each applicant's general suitability.

Of the thirty-two successful candidates, who will now be on probation for three months, seven were ex-servicemen, eight had been preachers and two school teachers ; there were five office workers and two civil servants, two farmers, three businessmen and one housekeeper, while two had previously been auxiliary colporteurs.

All had previously graduated from high school. Six had, in addition, graduated from university and ten from theological seminaries. All except two

had active positions as church workers—preachers, Sunday School teachers, elders, deacons, Bible class leaders. Every applicant was required to present an official letter of recommendation from the local church minister.

Training

Before being commissioned at a special service, the appointees were given some instruction on the keeping of official records of their work, how to order new books, use Post Office money transfer, and given some brief counsel on the right attitude to their work.

From time to time throughout the year, the men come to Seoul for a day at the Bible House, where they report on their experiences, share their difficulties and problems with the Bible House staff and generally end by having a meal together in a nearby restaurant. The main opportunity for intensive training is the week long retreat, organised in the summer.

Organisation of the colporteur's work

Each man is expected to sell about 2,500 Scriptures per month. He will sell by going from house to house, visiting markets, shops and schools, or on railway stations and other public places. He will probably visit some village churches, but most of his sales will be to non-Christians. As a rule, he works only in his own district. This does mean that some rural areas are not yet effectively reached. Of the 48 colporteurs now at work, 21 are in Seoul and vicinity; Seoul's population is less than two million. By contrast, in the province of South Kyungsang with an estimated population of 3,800,000, there is only one. Somehow men must be secured who live in these distant provinces. Perhaps another answer to this problem might be a Bible van able to make extended intineraries of the untouched rural areas. The bookshops in the cities serve a valuable purpose, being open as they are throughout the whole year.

The work of distribution by salaried colporteurs is very expensive. A Scripture portion costing up to 30 Hwan to produce costs the Bible Society a further 23 Hwan in salary and travelling expenses for the colporteur. The selling price is 20 Hwan. This means a loss of 33 Hwan (2½d.) on every Scripture portion distributed by colporteurs (based on the figures for 1959).

The average distribution of Scriptures by each colporteur for one year (1959 figures) is 4 Bibles, 20 New Testaments, 30,000 portions. The unbeliever is very reluctant to buy a whole New Testament or Bible. But he will fairly readily spend 1½d. for a portion. Of course, it would be difficult for the colporteur, who travels mostly on foot or in very overcrowded buses and trains, to take a large case with him. His precious books, carried in a small handcase or wrapped securely in a large cloth, go with him easily everywhere.

Retreat and Training Conference, Summer 1960

Imagine a grove of chestnut trees beside a mountain stream, ten miles north of Seoul city. Several small tents and one large one with matting on the ground for sleeping. Day and night the tent sides are all raised to catch every breeze in the intense summer heat. By 6 a.m. everyone is assembled for a morning worship service. Then comes breakfast, consisting of rice and seaweed soup. There follows an hour's Bible study, then an hour's lecture on Comparative Religions, when attention is given to the tenets of the main religious systems of beliefs and practice which the colporteur will encounter in Korea—Con-

fucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Chondokyo, Shamanism. From 10 to 12 there are further lectures. By 12 o'clock fans are being plied more enthusiastically than pencils ; the books are cleared away and a lunch of noodles is served and quickly eaten. There is now a welcome respite from the heat ; everyone cools off in the stream and then seeks the shade of the chestnut trees.

By 3 p.m. everyone has gathered again for a round-table conference (literally, in Korean "a sit-down-and-talk meeting"). This gives an opportunity for everyone to ask questions raised by the morning's work and to exchange views freely. Then for the next hour the experienced colporteurs present relate some of their actual experiences in the work. There is a short worship service after supper. Then, as dusk comes on and the cicadas begin their chorus in the chestnut trees, village people from round and about begin to gather as word has spread that there is to be a film. It will be either lantern slides or a sound movie based probably either upon Bible history or the work of the Bible Society. After this some of the colporteurs will entertain the audience with folk songs from their native provinces.

The various lectures spread throughout the conference which I have not yet mentioned are practical psychology (3 hours), the history of the Bible Society (2 hours), the nature of the Church and its relation to the Bible Society (2 hours), methods of Scripture distribution (1 hour). Four hours are given to demonstrating and instructing in the use of lantern and electric projectors ; and four hours to the use of puppets.

This is being written as the conference draws to a close. The closing service on the final morning will take the form of a Communion service in the Presbyterian tradition.

Bible Society and Missions co-operate in Burma

S. V. Vincent

IN 1899,THE YEAR WHEN the British and Foreign Bible Society's agency was established in Burma, six colporteurs began work and within two and a half years they had sold some 40,000 Scriptures. From then, numbers grew year by year and by 1905 there were 12 colporteurs, who sold 35,386 Scriptures, travelling 10,000 miles and visiting 46,000 houses. Six years later the number was 23, and they travelled 26,000 miles in the year, visiting 144,000 houses and selling 70,209 Scriptures. Expansion was checked by the first world war and, indeed, in 1925 the number of men had declined to 14. By 1930 the number had risen to 20 and these covered in that year 27,600 miles, visiting 68,000 houses and selling 52,720 books. When the second world war broke out there were 30 men but only 23 of these were directly employed by the Society, selling almost 78,000 Scriptures. From that time on, the work became more difficult and finally had to stop when the Japanese attack came. When the work began again after liberation, there were a few of the colporteurs available but no books for them to sell. This handful gradually got to work again but soon there were only three of them left. These have continued faithfully and today their average sales are between 4,000 and 5,000 books a year each.

In the early days of the work, women were employed as colporteurs, usually by grants-in-aid to missionaries who were responsible for them. It was soon found that there was little need in Burma for these women workers, as Burmese women have always been free to go about as they pleased and to buy what they wished. In 1918 the grants-in-aid for women colporteurs were withdrawn, but in that same year the system of grants-in-aid for men workers was introduced. It is important to note the main reason given—"to bring the Bible Society's system of colportage into more direct relationship with the Missionary Societies and to secure closer supervision of the sales of books". A grant of up to K.30/- a month was paid to the missionary who actually employed the man, and a commission of 12½% on sales was allowed to the man himself. I do not think there is any case recorded where one of these men equalled the sales of a directly employed colporteur. The system continued up to the last war but has not been resumed since.

The story told by the reports shows again and again how effective the colporteur often is as an evangelist. In one place it is said that he is not to be regarded as "a mere Bible-seller ; he is also a preacher of the Gospel". There was a colporteur who met opposition in a certain place but "he kept on preaching and selling books till all opposition wore down". In spite of all this there never seems to have developed any close cooperation between church and colporteur. It is reported as something unusual that at certain national festivals the whole mission staff turned out to support the colporteur. As lately as 1931 there is the lament, "The ideal that every mission worker should regard the sale of Scriptures as part of his regular work is still far from being realised. Too often the colporteur is left to plough his lonely furrow and his work is regarded as an inferior by-product of mission activity".

The place of the church member

In reading these old reports it is something of a shock to realise that the idea of the Church is missing altogether. The emphasis is continually on the missionary and the mission as the possible allies of the Society. Evangelists are thought of as mission workers rather than as servants of the Church. Although this situation was inevitable, because it was simply the fact that the missionary did carry all the responsibility, yet it is plain to us now that it contributed largely to the slowness of national Christians to share in evangelism and the distribution of the Scriptures. It seems to have been the limit of the vision of those days that mission workers should join in the task of evangelism and distribution, and it was not until after the last war that we began to think of every church member as a possible partner in the work. For just a few years we have had that vision of the Church and have begun to want its cooperation, but we cannot be surprised if we are met with a very slow response. The high cost of colportage in this post-war world adds a practical urgency to our pursuit of the ideas of voluntary distribution by the church, but if we are tempted to say suddenly to the churches, "This is your job ; get on with it", we shall be disillusioned, for this is too easy a shrugging-off of a problem we have helped to create.

A change of attitude towards the colporteur

The past has its effect, too, on the recruitment of new colporteurs. There is a reference to "these lowly workers" in one report, and this reveals an attitude to the colporteur which did not attract new men. There is frequently the insistence upon the need for supervision expressed in terms which indicate a relation-

ship of employer and employee rather than of colleagueship. Times have changed and all of us have learned to think of the colporteur as the spearhead of our work, and of our task as supporting him. Within the last year or so, we have been able to recruit three new men. Not one of them has come directly to us but each has been brought forward by his pastor or church. Each has in some special way shown already his zeal for his Lord. We have not been able to insist on any fixed standard of education, but have tried to make sure that each had sufficient education for the place in which he was to work. Two of the men had already had Bible School training and the third we were able to send to Bible School for a year. So the pattern begins to emerge—a man commended by his church, of reasonable education, trained in Bible knowledge, able to speak, ready to travel incessantly, fluent in one or two languages other than his own.

Providing support for the colporteur

Such a man is sent to work in some specific area, probably determined by his language and associations. His work cannot be directed from Rangoon, for distances are too great and communications often poor. Even if it were possible it would not be wise, for here is our best chance of cooperation with the church. Someone in the local church, perhaps a missionary, perhaps a national minister, is invited to act as supervisor and he helps the colporteur in everything. He orders the Scriptures needed, helps plan the work and specially the tours the colporteur will undertake, pays his salary and expenses out of sales and sends the necessary returns and reports to Rangoon. Every month there comes from each colporteur, through his supervisor, a journal of his travels and sales and a report of any interesting happenings on his tours. At the end of each quarter the supervisor sends a statement showing the value of Scriptures bought and the colporteur's salary and expenses. The average sales reported by the colporteurs are still very low compared with some other countries, but they are higher than they have ever been before. It seems that we have to accept the fact that in this country sales are by ones and twos, usually being the result of conversations and preaching which take much time. but are of vital importance. Our present target is an average monthly sale of 500 books, a figure which must be put alongside a remark from one report : "the sale of ten books often means a full day's work, including the visiting of a hundred houses".

Now that the team of colporteurs is growing in numbers and includes younger, inexperienced men, we shall be planning ways of bringing them together for refresher courses. Happily, we do know that most of the men have a real place in the fellowship of their local churches and often are leaders in them. This is the most valuable and effective source of strength of mind and spirit for them and also helps towards the longed-for co-ordination of the Society and the Church.

Going forward towards the goal

Years ago, an angry non-Christian said to one of our colporteurs, "These Scriptures of yours will soon be everywhere". Wars and disturbances of one kind or another have hindered the fulfilment of that angry prophecy, but it is still our goal. We believe it is also the goal of every church member in Burma, even if it is mostly unacknowledged and ignored. Today there is a remarkable interest in Christianity and in the Bible, and some church members are beginning to recognise the opportunity. Our colporteurs are alert and in good spirits, and we believe that with God's help we can count on going forward towards the goal.

India—Twenty-seven thousand hands

Theodore Williams

The following is an extract from an article sent to the U.B.S. by the Assistant General Secretary of the Bible Society of India and Ceylon. The author is a member of the Mobile Unit Team, an evangelistic association working in South India. It is not Bible Society work, but reveals some of the opportunities for colportage work in India.

Excitement in the shandy

THERE IS A STIR IN THE CROWD. Everyone, young and old, men and women, seems to be rushing towards a van which is moving into the shandy (market). "What advertisement is that ?" asks a man. "It may be snuff or beedi sellers," replies the other. "No, it is a book van. They are selling one-anna books", remarks a third who has read the banners fluttering on top of the van. Everybody is curious and in the meantime the van has come to a stop in a central place. The Mobile Unit Team gets busy and in a few minutes (this is part of the strategy, because briskness in business always arouses a favourable response) the equipment is set up. Then one of us takes the front seat with the 'mike' while the others take their positions near the book table ready for action. The crowd gets more and more curious and there is a lot of pushing and pulling. The music goes out over the air for a few minutes and then—the crowd is tense !—the announcement : "These are books containing God's Word, show-the way to heaven. They cost six annas, but here's a bargain—they are sold for one anna !" Immediately there is a rush to the table and countless hands are stretched out with money, asking for a Book.

This is typical of what happens on a hot afternoon in a shandy which the book van visits. The Mobile Unit Team started on this colportage tour on 1st February, covering parts of Trichy, Salem and Coimbatore districts of North Tamilnad. During the period of about twenty-six days, over *twenty-seven thousand Gospels* were sold, together with many Bibles and New Testaments. We limit ourselves strictly to the sale of Scriptures because our purpose is to put the Word of God into the hands and hearts of the people. Most of the work is done in shandies where people from surrounding villages gather for selling and buying. We have found that there are better sales in the shandy than elsewhere. It is also the quickest and easiest way to reach the largest number of village people at a single time. A list of the shandies in a district with their relative sizes is obtained from the District Board Office and then we visit then during the peak hours of business.

Such an effort, however carefully planned and organised, would be of no use without prayer backing. So we always endeavour to enlist prayer support of as many of God's children as possible, including the local Christians in each place visited. Sometimes after we had moved into a place, we were amazed to find that a few earnest souls had been agonising in prayer, being burdened for the thousands who gather in these shandies. And God, in answer to their prayers, had taken us to those places ! In one town a few believers had prepared a list

of the shandies of that area and had been praying that somehow God would send someone to reach them with the Gospel. And when we appeared on the scene the list was handed over to us and we were asked to do the work.

The Book speaks

The very first sign that we were moving out in God's plan and purpose is an incident that happened in the shandy on the Yercaud hills. That was the first day of our work. The sales began and the man at the 'mike' was pouring out his heart, pointing people to the Book and to the Christ of the Book. After a few minutes our attention was drawn to what impressed us as being a repetition of a scene from *The Pilgrim's Progress*. A Man was leaning against the van holding a Book in his hands and sobbing. We took him aside and talked to him. He tried to speak but could not, for his sobs and sighs choked his words. Finally he managed to say that he himself did not know why he was weeping. Perhaps it was because of his wicked ways and because he now wanted to know the True Way. We pointed him to Christ and prayed with him. This incident was God's seal upon the work He was sending us to do, and true to His promise the Lord brought us into contact with many such souls. Though all did not break down and weep, many came to us with the definite question : "What must I do to be saved ?"

At another place a young Muslim bought a Gospel and stood listening till we had finished our work ; and when we got ready to leave, he came and expressed his desire for Christ, joining us openly as we prayed for him there.

Occasionally we had the local Christians, evangelists or pastors coming in and wholeheartedly taking part in the work. In a certain place where we were out selling Gospels, a smartly dressed young man came and bought a book and then started urging others to buy. Then he took some books and went into the crowd. Very soon he came back for more. He seemed to have caught a new inspiration to sell the Christian Book to his non-Christian friends. Upon enquiry we learned that he was a Malabar Christian working in a sugar factory and evidently had been waiting for such an opportunity to express his love for his Master.

It was interesting to make a study of the people who bought the books. In some shandies it was the women who bought most of the books, while in the cattle shandies it was mostly the men. Both the literate and the illiterate bought books. The very thought of God having a Book and speaking His mind through it was new to them ; they would have it because it was God's and anything of God they did not want to miss. We were thrilled to see wandering gypsies invest the few *naye paise* they had in the buying of God's Word. After buying the Book, two of them got interested in the van and the men who were selling the books, and they approached us with many questions. When they were treated with warmth and love and told about the love of Christ, they could not believe their ears. This is not surprising when one remembers that such people are accustomed to nothing but doubt and suspicion and rough treatment from society. It is no wonder they responded so wholeheartedly to the Gospel of Love. It will not be surprising if up there in the Golden City there will be a few gypsies as a result of the contact that day.

There must be a reason

Now the question may come to you, dear reader : What is the secret of these tremendous sales of Gospels ? Why is it the people crowd themselves

to buy these books ? Has it got anything to do with the colporteurs ? Perhaps a little—when they see earnest men shouting and running here and there in the hot sun to sell these inexpensive books, they are curious. What about the public address system and the music ? Yes, they too have their share of attracting the people. These, together with the bright colour and inexpensiveness of the books, combine to make colportage a success. However, the most important thing is the *innate hunger for God* in the hearts of people everywhere. The world around gets more and more complicated and presents a complexity of problems to the average man. Unable to cope with these, he turns to God and if he does not find a satisfactory answer to his quest for God, he becomes an easy prey to diabolical and atheistic ideologies and systems.

LATIN AMERICA

Success of Volunteer Colportage

Samuel F. Nelson

Scripture distribution and evangelism

Three years ago a group of one hundred and twenty-five Presbyterian pastors and lay ministers met for a five-day conference on evangelism in the city of Paraiso, state of Tabasco, Mexico. Representatives of the American Bible Society's Penzotti Institute had been invited to explain and demonstrate the principles of community Scripture distribution. Lectures and demonstrations were held in the mornings and in the afternoons all who attended the conference engaged in distribution practice in the city. At the conclusion of the institute, the leaders of the presbytery announced that the methods of Scripture distribution which had been presented would be incorporated as a permanent and important part of the programme of evangelism. Since that time, organised Scripture distribution by pastors and evangelists of the Presbyterian church in the state of Tabasco has been used both alone and in conjunction with other forms of evangelism. Results reported show a growth in church membership and attendance and new churches established, all attributable to the strengthening of the programme of evangelism by effective Scripture distribution. This is colportage in Latin America along modern terms by the volunteer lay membership of the churches. It is now actively practised in many parts of Latin America under the impulse and aegis of trained Bible Society specialists in distribution.

Mexico has been used as a proving ground by the American Bible Society in the development of more effective methods of distribution and also in the training of the personnel required to introduce them to the churches. It was found that several types of trained personnel were necessary. With the lamented passing of secretary F. E. Estrello, Mr. Daniel Lopez de Lara was appointed head of the agency. Mr. Lopez de Lara had taken the Penzotti training course and the great advantage of the secretary having this special preparation in distribution has been abundantly demonstrated in the kind of service which he is rendering. For the task of bringing a more effective programme of Scripture distribution directly to the churches, two special promoters have been trained in a twelve-week intensive Penzotti Institute. Their responsibility is to direct

distribution operations in designated sections of the republic, including the enlistment, training, and organisation of the laymen of the churches for distribution, cooperating with the churches and missions in developing a more effective distribution and use of the Scriptures, and in the supervision of Bible Society colporteurs in the area.

Training of personnel within the churches

It is clear, however, that for a country the size of Mexico, the Bible Society can never provide sufficient professional personnel to service adequately the churches. Means have therefore been sought to give training to special personnel in the churches. Two approaches have been successfully used. During the months of June, July and August this past year, a Penzotti training course was set up for the purpose of preparing not only Bible Society promoters, but also pastors and laymen who desired to prepare themselves for a more effective service in their own churches. A great deal of interest was shown but only a limited number of students were actually recruited for the twelve-week institute. It was found that it is difficult for the men to be released from their regular work for such an extended period. In the future, it is planned that the course will be shorter, perhaps six weeks, with evening classes offered as well. The content of the course included such matters as the use of the Scriptures in promoting their distribution and use, the Bible and the great reform movements of history, the origin and transmission of the Bible, effective Scripture sales and distribution techniques, the principles of organised Scripture distribution, and supplementary lectures on related topics. Practical field work in various types of distribution was an important part of the course.

The second approach to the training of personnel for distribution by the churches was made through setting up week-end institutes both in individual churches and, where possible, for groups of churches. Three to four classes were held on Saturday evenings, on Sunday and, occasionally, on Monday. In this way hundreds of laymen, during the twelve-week period in which the Penzotti Institute was in session, received practical instruction in community Scripture distribution. Such instruction included organisational procedures, distribution methods and follow-up techniques to ensure effective use of the Scriptures placed. As a climax to the twelve-week training and promotional programme, one hundred churches in the Federal District and its environs cooperated in a simultaneous house-to-house distribution campaign in the month of August. This provided a field of practice for the students in the Penzotti Institute as well as a promotional focus for the laymen's training institutes in the churches.

Scripture colportage in Latin America is being assumed in large measure by the national churches through lay volunteer service. While the day of the classical type of colporteur whose lonely and noble service pioneered the spread of the Good News in Latin America is by no means over, it is becoming more and more a specialised task restricted to the areas not yet occupied by the church. Such areas are the remaining geographical outposts, and also special sectors of society reached more effectively by trained specialists : institutions, universities, certain professional classes, etc.

A dual challenge to the Bible Societies

Apart from such special services, the bulk of Scripture distribution falls as the responsibility of lay volunteers in the national churches. Indeed, it is they, as representatives of a local congregation who can most effectively circulate

the Scriptures for they offer with the book the necessary interpretation and fellowship of a Christian group. That the churches are eager to assume this task is corroborated by abundant evidence, but it is also true that in numerous instances they do not know how and are eager for help. This confronts the Bible Societies with a dual challenge : first they must be sure that all who represent the distribution agencies know how the task should be carried out, and secondly, that means and materials are provided—within the limits of the Societies' historical purpose—to give the help which the churches require.

Special campaigns in Argentina

Ivan H. Nothdurft

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS Sr. Thomas Mulder has been promoter of Bible use and distribution in the Argentine. During his first year he prepared special campaigns of Bible sales in various parts of the republic in order to make himself and his work known to the churches. Once this was completed the demand for his services have been far in excess of his possibilities to fulfil. Sr. Mulder now lives in Cordoba, a city of about a million inhabitants, in the interior of the country. Thus he not only concentrates his efforts in that area, but adds to the outreach and effectiveness of the work of the Bible Societies.

The work of the promoter varies with the region, but in general it might be classified as follows :

1. A campaign of training and distribution for a local church or churches of one denomination ;
2. A city-wide programme of distribution ;
3. Classes in methods for students of theological seminaries or Bible institutes.

In a "local church" or denominational effort preliminary plans are made with the pastor or pastors, dates set and a publicity campaign begun. Interested laymen are enrolled in classes of preparation or training. These are in part of a devotional nature to emphasise the spiritual aspect of this type of ministry. Once this instruction is given, the participants go out two by two to present the Scriptures in a door-to-door canvass. Records are kept of each visit and a recapitulation session affords an opportunity to exchange experiences. The enthusiasm engendered is marvellous and the resulting deepening of religious experience valuable, not only to the participants but to the church programme itself. Records are kept of purchases and a follow-up inquiry of Bible usage and study is made. At times these campaigns are combined with a programme of preaching evangelism and the two-fold emphasis is often highly successful involving an even greater number in the activity.

City-wide campaigns are similar but larger in scope. In the city of Rosario, for example, more than 35 churches cooperated. Organisational meetings were held, publicity prepared and information sent to all cooperating groups. The city was divided into eight zones. Classes were given in each zone attended by laymen from four to five churches in each area. In this manner the whole city is soon aware that something is happening. Goals are set which serve as

a further stimulus to the teams of visitors, but here again the high point often comes in sharing experiences at the close of each session. In this way the results are reflected not only in individual growth but in collective witness as well.

Short courses for seminaries and Bible institutes are also popular and successful. Several institutes have asked that the classes be given each year. Seminary students thus receive excellent, practical training in colportage. A group of interested students of the International Baptist Seminary in Buenos Aires took part in a special course. In addition to a careful and studied plan of area visitation several students sold more than 3,000 Bibles in front of one of the major cinema houses where the film "The Ten Commandments" was being shown. Dr. William Cooper lauded the colportage campaign as the finest experience in promotional evangelism his students had received.

One can note, however, that the statistical results from this type of promotional work are impossible to measure. Nevertheless, it is easy to see that the Word is shared with others and that increasing numbers of Christians are enlisted to give testimony to that faith which means life. In these turbulent times of conflicting propaganda no other witness is more imperative.

Trained secretary and church members work together in Brazil

Luiz Antonio Giraldi

The Colportage Secretary of the Bible Society of Brazil, the first sent from Brazil to the Penzotti Institute, reports the following concerning his second year of activity :

THE SECRETARY HAS ENDEAVOURED during the past year to accept as many invitations as possible, but has had to decline more than one half of them for lack of time. His activities were limited almost exclusively to the state of Sao Paulo where he had his headquarters, thus avoiding long and expensive trips. However, he promoted some campaigns and gave some brief courses on colportage in the states of Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Paraná and in the Federal District. The Scriptures were furnished on consignment to the churches during the campaigns with the same discount as those given to colporteurs, that is 25%, and transported by the jeep furnished for the use of the Colportage Secretary. Considering that the discount offered to the churches in the colportage campaigns amounted to more than Cr$700,000.00, an amount sufficient to maintain two additional secretaries in the same period, and that this discount is not of great importance to the churches, we will experiment during the coming year with reducing the discount to 10%.

Some unusual campaigns

Some campaigns were unusual in one or another aspect, as for example in the campaign held in Curitiba, the capital of the state of Parana, in which an unusual number of Scriptures were sold : 4,200 Bibles, 500 New Testaments and 3,000 Illustrated Gospels in just one week with the cooperation of 25 local churches ; the campaign held in the small city of Sao José do Rio Pardo, in the

state of Sao Paulo was notable for the high level of cooperation. One church with only 30 members furnished 33 persons for the house-to-house selling, and many people set aside their secular affairs during the entire week to dedicate themselves to the sale of Scriptures. The campaign held in the city of Ribeirao Preto, in the state of Sao Paulo, was unusual in respect to the great number of people who came to the meetings. An average of 400 persons attended the meetings held each evening for the purpose of orientation and of creating enthusiasm during the week of distribution. The colportage campaign held in Machado, Minas Gerais was notable for the unusual enthusiasm shown for the work. One group sold in one day in the house-to-house campaign, the entire stock of Scriptures provided for the whole week. The campaign launched on Bible Day in the city of Sao Paulo, the capital of the state, was also unusual in that 106 churches of all denominations participated, resulting in the sale of 56,000 Scriptures.

Many were the edifying experiences reported during the campaigns—public testimonies for the inspiration of the churches !

In Machado, the distribution was begun in the red light district. To the surprise of the most optimistic, at least one Bible was sold in each house visited. Some of these poor women at the beginning of the interview appeared suspicious or indifferent ; however, after the presentation of the Bible and the reading of some appropriate passages they were moved and became interested. Many wept on hearing the reading of John 8:1-11.

In Ribeirao Preto one lady who worked in the Post Office and Telegraph Department sold 50 Bibles to her colleagues at work during the week of Bible Distribution.

Further, in this city, which had been considered as one where resistance to the Gospel was the greatest, various persons, including two pastors, went out for the first time offering the Bible from house to house and returned radiant, for they succeeded in selling a Bible in almost every home they visited. Many who bought a Bible in the afternoon came to church in the evening.

In Santa Cruz do Rio Pardo a group of young people went out for the first time to sell the Bible from house to house. They were so timid at first that they asked the secretary to go with them and do the selling in the first houses till they had got up enough courage to proceed alone. The secretary agreed to this and then made an appointment to meet the group at six o'clock in the evening so that they might return to the church together. However, they could not meet until seven o'clock, for so great had been their enthusiasm that they forgot the time they were supposed to return. When they met, one of them said, "It was much easier than we thought. After the first visits our fear disappeared and we were able to sell quite a lot. We are enthused and would like to keep on until all the Scriptures that we brought are sold."

In Baurú a lady presented herself for colportage work. She was going to sell Bibles from house to house for the first time and only had one hour in which to work. The secretary gave her three Bibles, one New Testament and some Illustrated Gospels, and she asked him for three more Bibles. He then explained that in his experience these Scriptures were more than sufficient for one hour of work. As she insisted, he gave her the Bibles requested. After prayer, she went out. Less than half an hour later she returned with her hands empty, having sold from house-to-house all the Scriptures she had brought with her, to the surprise of the secretary.

In Vila Zelina, Sao Paulo, a volunteer was selling Scriptures from house-to-house and met a man who said he was an atheist and was not interested in religious books. The volunteer then asked permission to tell what the Bible had done for him, and narrated in detail the moving story of his regeneration through the reading of the Bible. After listening attentively, the 'atheist' said : "If the Bible did this for you, I should like to become acquainted with it". He bought one, and asked that the volunteer wait at the door while he repeated the story he had just heard to his relatives. A few minutes later he returned with three more people who also bought Bibles.

One believer from one of the churches of Vila Maria, Sao Paulo, related the following in one of the meetings : "After offering the Bible successively in various houses I soon became discouraged and wanted to go back to the church. However, having in mind the importance of the work being done, and after a brief prayer, I gathered my strength and courage to go to the next house. In that house I succeeded in selling and the purchaser is this gentleman who is seated at my side and who has come to church for the first time".

How to make distribution effective

The average of cooperation in the campaigns of colportage in Brazil has been about 23% of the membership of each participating church, and of sale, one for each 4 contacts. The cooperation of the believers is greatly dependent on the time spent in preparation for the campaign and on the leader, who should be more than just a teacher, but also a leader who goes in the forefront. Sales effectiveness depends chiefly on three factors : technical preparation, knowledge of the Bible and personal ability. The first two often overcome the lack of ability. The best results are obtained in the distribution of the Bible when the emphasis is placed on the quality of distribution and not the quantity of Scriptures sold. And an effective distribution can be obtained through an interesting presentation of the Bible which arouses in the buyer a desire to begin reading immediately and by the later contact by the seller with the buyer. To accomplish a good presentation of the Bible, technical preparation in colportage is necessary and for the later contact it is indispensable that there be annotated on the data card of the buyer, principally, his name, his address and the degree of interest which he showed in the Bible. Some weeks after the distribution, the church which promoted the colportage campaign should initiate a new campaign of visitation among those persons who bought Scriptures, and when opportunity offers, should provide elementary Bible study for those interested.

Other activities of the Colportage Secretary

Besides promoting Scripture Distribution campaigns, the Colportage Secretary of the Bible Society of Brazil has endeavoured to give help to the colporteurs, giving them lessons in colportage and furnishing material. He has given short courses in seminaries and Bible institutes, has written leaflets, brochures and articles concerning colportage and has endeavoured to follow sales promotion as practised by commercial establishments, adapting their methods to Scripture colportage. In the plan of activities for the coming year are included, besides those cited, the following : preparation of audio visual aids for colportage (films, demonstration, etc.), a correspondence course in colportage, the publication of a colportage manual for the use of the pastor, a special promotion of the sale of luxury editions of the Bible, and the organisation of the colportage departments in the regional secretaries' offices.

SOME BIBLE SOCIETY REFLECTIONS ON THE 1910 EDINBURGH CONFERENCE

W. J. Platt

IT IS 50 YEARS SINCE the first World Missionary Conference and celebrations of that event have been organised in many places. This article does not purport to be an account of the Conference, but rather comment upon it from a particular standpoint.

Reports on conferences, however, make dull reading. If they were interesting conferences one regrets that one was not present. If they were unimportant one may even be bored in the reading. About the Edinburgh Conference, it is different. It was epoch-making, and whether one was there or not is irrelevant. The Archbishop of Canterbury of the day spoke of it as having "no parallel in the history of this or of other lands". *The Bible in the World* declared it to be "a memorable assembly, never equalled in the history of modern Christendom".

It was important for at least two reasons : it marked the consummation of what Latourette has called the "individual and sporadic" efforts of early pioneers of the modern missionary movement (men and Societies) bringing their descendants to a dynamic realisation of an underlying common purpose in their efforts ; it also presented a challenge in world evangelisation the like of which had not been experienced for a century. Its concern, of course, was neither with Church Orders, nor with doctrinal matters : it was a missionary conference which at that time meant largely a conference of missionaries. Indeed, it was a consequence of the rise of the great missionary movement of the 19th century. The amazing growth of the ecumenical spirit which has followed and, in 1948, the foundation of the World Council of Churches itself, were by-products of that same movement.

It is therefore no exaggeration to say that "Edinburgh 1910" was a turning point in the history of world church relationships. Since the Reformation the main direction of such relationships had been centrifugal, today it is centripetal. Only ten years after the Conference an *Appeal to All Church People* which issued from Lambeth stated : "The vision which rises before us is that of a Church, genuinely Catholic, loyal to all Truth and gathering into its fellowship all 'who profess and call themselves Christians', within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common, and made serviceable to the whole body of Christ . . . . It is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled".

And the spirit which emanated from Edinburgh did not only concern missionaries or western denominations ; from then on there has been a deepening of the foundations of the church (as distinct from the mission) overseas. At Edinburgh, of 1,350 delegates only seventeen were Nationals representing indigenous churches. At succeeding Conferences the increase in the number of nationals attending is illuminating. At Jerusalem in 1928 one-fifth were National representatives, at Tambaram in 1938—one-half. Then in 1948 (still on the crest of the wave of 19th century missionary movement) came the formation of a World Council of Churches And growth in the autonomy of overseas churches has gone steadily on ever since.

Planning the conference

Behind such a Conference there went a great deal of hard work and dedicated planning, and it is interesting and not without significance to note the part that Bible Societies played in it. In the issue of the magazine of the British and Foreign Bible Society for February 1910 appears a note: "During the present winter", it says, "we have welcomed to the Bible House various Commissions, meeting in London, which are engaged in the important task of preparing for the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh next June .... In order that missionary societies in England may derive the utmost possible benefit from the Conference, a small English Committee has been appointed with the Rev. J. H. Ritson (Secretary of the B.F.B.S.) as one of the joint secretaries, and a room at the Bible House is now set apart for the use of this Committee." Fifty-four missionary societies from many lands sent delegates to Edinburgh, amongst whom were numerous Bible Society personnel—24 representing the B.F.B.S. Dr. Ritson was a joint recording secretary of the Conference. The study preparations for it were extensive. In March 1910 preparatory meetings were held in the London Bible House, and amongst others the Rev. Dr. Robson spoke on "The Inception and Growth of the Conference". Mr. J. H. Oldham (who later became Secretary of the Continuation Committee) spoke on "The Work of the Conference Commissions" and Dr. Eugene Stock spoke on "The Call of the Present Age", when a well known Bible Society Treasurer, Mr. William Lamplough, was in the chair.

The place of the Bible

If one peruses the Conference programmes, however, one is surprised to find that in over three hundred speeches on missionary problems, the consideration of the Bible itself and its use in evangelism seems to have had little or no specific place. And even concerning Christian literature in general there appears to have been only a forty-minute discussion. The reading of the Scriptures, of course, had an important place in the daily devotions, and one delegate wrote that : "The words of the Bible never sounded so majestic or so tender as when read in the intervals of prayer," but he goes on : "like a postulate of Euclid, the World Missionary Conference took the Bible for granted". This is the more astonishing as the actual translation and circulation of the Bible were definite priorities in the thought and activity of Carey, Morrison and other pioneers of the modern missionary movement in the early 19th century, of which Edinburgh 1910 was the consummation. That movement was itself a consequence of the Evangelical Revival of the 18th century and without that Revival there might have been no modern missionary movement, no Edinburgh Conference in 1910 and no World Council of Churches in 1948.

Carey has often been described as the Father of the modern missionary movement, and according to his official biographer he was "persuaded that not by transcending Scripture, but by diligent and dutiful ascertainment and appropriation of its truth could God be reliably known". Moreover, "he resolved to make himself a man of the Book". It has been written of him that "his happiest fortune lay in being borne upon the tidal wave of the Wesleys and Whitfield and his zeal to evangelise heathendom was the intenser for his having lived in the blaze of Wesley's achievement". We are told that "the more he studied the Bible, wrestling with Hebrew and Greek, which he had learned with practically no assisting, the more sure he became that the commands of Christ were being inadequately fulfilled".

Remembering, then, that one of the central themes of the Evangelical Revival was Wesley's doctrine of "Scriptural holiness", one is impressed again with the profound significance of the centrality of the Bible and its use in the birth and development of the great missionary movement to which the whole of modern Christendom owes so much. "Let me speak plainly", wrote Wesley. "If by catholic principles you mean any other than scriptural, they weigh nothing with me. I follow no other rule whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures." In 1772, describing in Parliament the leaders of the Revival, Lord Chatham (the elder Pitt) observed : "They contend for a scriptural creed and a scriptural worship".

The foundations of the World Church

While the rise of the modern missionary movement, then, was a result of the Evangelical Revival, it is true that not all the leading British missionary societies owe their birth to the impetus given by it, though most of them undoubtedly do. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, for example, were founded before it, and theirs was an essential part in the preparation of the Church for what was to come. But they were born at a time which in Britain was not propitious for religion, and concerning which the Bishop of Oxford (later Archbishop of Canterbury) said: "Christianity is now railed at and ridiculed with very little reserve, and the teachers of it without any at all". So the income of these two Societies was small and during the 18th century that of the S.P.G. fluctuated between £2,000 and £3,000 a year, while the S.P.C.K. was so short of funds that even at the turn of the century it had to refuse to publish more Welsh Bibles—a fact which contributed to the foundation of the B.F.B.S. Widespread missionary dedication had to wait on a re-discovery of vital religion—in which the Bible had a central place. No event in this process was perhaps more epoch-making than that of Wesley finding his heart "strangely warmed" as he heard Luther's *Preface to the Epistle to the Romans* read in Aldersgate Street. So a new age dawned in which we see quite a different train of events and of which Edinburgh 1910 is the child. In 1792 the Baptist Missionary Society was founded, in 1795 the London Missionary Society, in 1796 the Scottish Missionary Society, in 1799 the Church Missionary Society and the Religious Tract Society. In 1804 came the B.F.B.S. and in 1813 the Methodist Missionary Society. And the story goes on for half a century and includes Europe and America. In 1797 the Netherlands Missionary Society was founded and in 1814 the Netherlands Bible Society; in 1810 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; in 1814 the American Baptist Missionary Union; in 1815 the Basel Missionary Society; in 1816 the American Bible Society; the Paris Bible Society in 1818, and in 1822 the Paris Evangelical Mission.

A new ecumenical spirit Also

As we celebrate the 1910 Conference, with its emphasis on the ecumenical spirit, we note that one of the contributory factors was the birth of the Bible Society movement 150 years ago. The actual foundation of the B.F.B.S. with one or two other interdenominational societies marked the manifestation of a catholicity of design and a wideness of world purpose which even to us today seem remarkable. In the Report of the Edinburgh Conference on the subject of "Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity" (Commission VIII) tribute is paid to Bible Societies : "Foremost among the cooperative institutions of the Church are the Bible Societies, which rest on an interdenominational basis and

have an international outlook. Their work is essential to missionary enterprise and not only do they contribute to the promotion of unity, but without them unity is unthinkable".

How this new spirit worked at local level could be seen when one of the many local Auxiliaries of the Society was founded in Norwich in 1810. Joseph John Gurney (one of whose descendants is still on the B.F.B.S. General Committee) wrote : "The Bishop first argued, and admirably well, upon the excellence of the Society. He then introduced the General Secretaries, one Steinkopf—a German Lutheran—followed by Hughes, a Welsh Baptist .... We had a remarkable day, a perfectly harmonious mixture of High Church, Low Church, Lutheran, Baptist, Quaker. It was a time which seemed to pull down all barriers of distinction and to melt us all into one common Christianity ...."

For over a century prior to 1910 the Bible Society movement across the world had been regularly calling together Christians of all denominations around a Book which was the common property of them all. In Britain, Auxiliaries of the Society had been established in almost every town and city and men and women of widely differing churchmanship met annually in hundreds of small local Auxiliary meetings (today it is estimated that between eight and ten thousand similar annual meetings are held) helping to lay the foundations of a new ecumenical spirit. The same movement with the same catholicity spread to the British Dominions.

These links must not be broken

But Bible Societies are merely a means to an end. It is the Gospel itself which matters and it cannot be taken for granted. Bishop Barry in his *Relevance of Christianity* has reminded us that almost every revival or renewal within the Christian Church has come about by the rediscovery of Scripture. Bishop Berggrav has told us too that in the discussions on Faith and Order held under the auspices of the Council of Churches, "whenever the wheels of cooperation have begun to slow down, someone would ask : 'What do the Scriptures say about this ?' Then the wheels would begin to turn again". Speaking of the world-wide Church of today, with its varying Orders and histories and backgrounds, Professor C. H. Dodd, at the Third Jubilee of the B.F.B.S. in 1954, said : "As the frontiers of the Church advance into new regions, and the 'younger churches' claim their independence—and in some cases are forcibly separated from their brethren in old Christendom .... how are the links to be preserved ? How is the consciousness of 'one Church, one Faith' to be kept clear ? The best hope lies in the widespread and intelligent use of the Scriptures ; and that this does exist in the younger Churches, often to an extent which may well rouse our emulation, has been evident in ecumenical circles. So long as the Bible still provides a clearly apprehended frame of reference for the beliefs and practices of all churches, the links will not be broken, however they may be strained".

And today, it is reassuring to see that a rediscovery of the Bible and the use of the Bible is taking place on many hands. At the recent Youth Conference in Lausanne, for example, Bible Study was at the heart of the gathering. In preparation for the forthcoming Assembly of the W.C.C. at New Delhi (1961) a preparatory booklet for local congregations has been prepared and 150,000 copies in 40 languages are to be distributed. The booklet contains eight studies on "Jesus Christ, the Light of the World". At the Assembly itself, for the first time, it is hoped to find time in the programme for definite Bible study each day, while one evening at least will be given to emphasis on the *use*

of the Bible. And today, between the W.C.C. and the International Missionary Council and the Bible Societies, there is a Joint Committee with its own staff, working towards a new and added emphasis on the actual use of the Bible and its place in our religious life. It is from such an emphasis that world evangelisation could re-vitalise its vision and power, and the younger churches receive a lasting foundation.

The new world in which we function is more complex and difficult than that of 1910, but for Christians the Truth of the Gospel stands and Jesus Himself remains unique. At Edinburgh 1910, Africa was hardly mentioned and Latin America left out. Two world wars, the rise of Communism, the closing of China, the end of colonialism and the prestige of the West, the resurgence of ancient faiths have all followed. Today, the well is deep and men have nothing to draw with. But our Lord still offers mankind the Living Water of Life. In any new appraisal of our world task, even by the churches themselves, we still need to recall words of the late Dr. John R. Mott about the Bible and the Bible Societies : "*Your* task undergirds every essential activity of the Christian Church".

Ecumenical Youth Conference—Lausanne

FIVE YOUNG PEOPLE represented the U.B.S. at the Ecumenical Youth Conference held in Lausanne in July. In addition to this representation, the U.B.S. also had a small exhibition, indicating the extent and nature of Bible Society work in the world, and a stall for publications.

In the impressions which the delegates have written of the conference, all agree on the value of the Bible Societies being represented at such a gathering, and that through the opportunity of worship, Bible study and discussions with young people from so many countries and denominations, they came away with a greater sense of the essential unity of our faith, indeed, as one delegate puts it, "a feeling of delighted surprise at one another, that all of us, people from quite different nations and confessions, held the same convictions and believed in the same Lord."

The Findings of the conference make no particular reference to the Bible and its translation, production and distribution. Nor was this expected. But they stress more than once the desirability of "ecumenical" Bible study, as a means of experiencing our unity in Christ. It is therefore quite appropriate that, among the suggested subjects for intercession arising from the Findings of the conference, we should read : Let us pray that unity between Christians of different churches in one place may be more clearly shown in united prayer, Bible study, witness and service. As the Assembly Chairman, the Rev. Canon Edward Patey, said in his final sermon, " . . . .the Bible offers no blue-print for a united Church. But it offers a map and a compass and a guide for the journey . ."

The following are some of the points made by individual delegates when asked for their comments on the value of having Bible Society representation at the conference.

Elizabeth Goodin, of The British and Foreign Bible Society:

"What do you do . . . .?" "Which Church do you belong to . . . .?" At every meal these questions and similar ones were asked and answered as over 1,750 delegates from Europe, Africa, Asia, North and South America sat down together, because at each meal one's neighbour was different and time was so short in which to learn about the other's country, way of life, form of worship. For within the space of eleven days young delegates to the First European Ecumenical Youth Assembly organised by the World Council of Churches had the task of forging yet another link in the chain of Unity.

In this ecumenical setting it was felt that the Bible Societies should be represented and under the auspices of the United Bible Societies two delegates were sent to Lausanne by the B.F.B.S. and one by the N.B.S.S. These were joined by other Bible Society delegates from Austria and Germany. The spirit of cooperation which characterises Bible Society work throughout the world was experienced at Lausanne as five nationalities helped to set up one of the two Bible Society displays on show during the Assembly. The ideas of each one contributed to a striking table display of free leaflets and Scripture versions grouped in front of a map of Europe showing the centres of Bible Society work. The stand attracted delegates who were delighted to see a copy of the Scriptures in their own language and were interested to learn about the work of the Societies. For many delegates it was their first contact with Bible Society work and the names and addresses were taken of many young people who stopped at the stand, so that further information might be sent to them by their respective Societies. We Bible Society delegates felt that right at the beginning of the Assembly we had already achieved a great measure of the Unity the other delegates were seeking, because through our common love of the Bible and our work for the Bible Societies we were at one with each other.

One of the greatest challenges to the European and Western way of life is the differential in the standard of living compared with other parts of the world. At Lausanne we all asked ourselves what could be done to aid countries of "rapid social change" both spiritually and materially. Here again the Bible Societies were able to demonstrate how they are deeply involved in this task, because the B.F.B.S. commissioned special exhibition panels to be designed for Lausanne. Two of them showed the work of Scripture translation and circulation in the continents of Africa and India. Delegates were able to see that where man is discovering a new way of life, the Word of God is being made available in his own language. A third panel demonstrated the world situation today with its vast areas of poverty and illiteracy crying out for spiritual and material aid.

Margaret Robertson, of the National Bible Society of Scotland:

The U.B.S. stand was an excellent form of publicity. Its position was good and none of the delegates could avoid noticing it. Many stopped to look and stayed to ask questions and take literature. Delegates either knew of the Bible Societies or were completely ignorant concerning their work. Those who knew the Society in their own country were delighted to recognise something from their homeland ; those to whom it was new were interested to learn of the work, and often amazed at simple Bible Society facts and figures.

Many of the delegates mentioned that the conference tended to deal with abstract matters, and they felt the need of something practical. The U.B.S. were there to fill this need, in presenting the challenge of Bible Society work.

Both in study groups and in the Draft Findings of the Assembly, it was mentioned that there was an ignorance of the Bible, and a need to study it intelligently and diligently. Several delegates stopped to ask for help in beginning Bible study and study-groups and Bible Society delegates were there to give advice.

Talking to delegates who stopped to look at the stall gave a lot of opportunity to direct their interest to the Bible Society of their own country. A group of Portuguese pastors were thrilled to read of their country in the B.F.B.S. report, and returned several times to examine literature—and take it ! An American girl, interested in linguistics, was glad to hear of the A.B.S. and will contact them when she returns to the U.S.A. A Swiss policeman, who helped locate a missing parcel, requested a copy of "The Gospel in Many Tongues", which is being sent to him. An Anglican clergyman stopped to ask about the Bible Study programme for his young people, and many others from a wide variety of countries learnt about the Bible Society work in their area, often for the first time. It often appeared as if delegates from Africa or the Far East knew more of the Bible Societies than those from Europe or America—but this may be generalising !

Karl-Georg Gutberlet, Frankfurt, Germany :

Interest in our exhibition was astonishingly great, when one takes into account the very short time for recreation which the participants had. Perhaps on a similar occasion in the future the stand could be manned in shifts, as I noticed that personal contacts with visitors, as they looked at the material exhibited, were far more effective than even the most attractive pamphlets . . . . The posters and map on the U.B.S. stand gave an appropriate impression of the significance of the world-wide, i.e. ecumenical work and task of the U.B.S. And the U.B.S. leaflet in three languages was also suitable for that purpose.

Robert Kauer, of Vienna:

From what we observed the U.B.S. stand made a good impression on the delegates and encouraged many to pick up some of the printed material set out.

More might have been achieved by us as a delegation if we had been able to have occasional discussions together as a group, for instance before the 'information evening', so that the U.B.S. delegates themselves would have more contact with one another . . . . On a similar occasion in future it would be useful if U.B.S. delegates could come better prepared to pass on information of a concrete and practical nature regarding Bible Society work in their own country, the possibilities for young people taking part in it, etc. . . . We ought to be able to speak with more emphasis about the relationship between the Bible Societies and the ecumenical movement.

John Dean, of The British and Foreign Bible Society:

Most important, I believe, were the personal contacts we were able to make at Lausanne. In our groups, in our dormitories and at the U.B.S. stand itself, we were able to talk with many people about the work of the Bible Societies and their aims and needs. I must admit that I was surprised by the degree of interest shown, and also by the fact that many seemed already aware of the nature and scope of the work . . . .

In spite of the fact that the stand was not fully planned in advance, I think it compared favourably with all the others erected in the exhibition hall . . . .

I felt painfully aware of the drabness and unimaginative layout of some of the Scripture productions and literature.... The Jubilee Bible (of the B.F.B.S.) was a step in the right direction, but bears little comparison to the new effort of the Imprimerie de la Concorde, or some of the work of the Stuttgart Bible Society.... I believe that.... apart from the importance of making the Book a worthy production for its readers all over the world, the Bible Societies must show that they are concerned to make the Bible attractive, as well as available, if they are to enlist the support of European Christian Youth.

Finally, I would re-emphasise my conviction that the presence of the U.B.S. stand at Lausanne was successful and worthwhile, and I would express the hope that there should be participation in all conferences of this kind in the future, at which as many different young people as possible in Bible Society work should be given the opportunity of attending.

News from all the World

Argentina

Encouraged by the good results obtained in Buenos Aires, the Cordoba Regional Committee of the Bible Societies in Argentina also set up a Bible stall near the entrance of a local cinema where *The Ten Commandments* was being shown early in the summer. The stall was manned continuously by members of the Auxiliary, under the direction of the Bible Society promoter for Bible Distribution, Mr. T. Mulder. Above it was the caption: You have seen the film ?....Now read the Book ! Excellent results have been reported.

Austria

Recent reports of the work of the Youth Group of the Austrian Bible Committee indicate a variety of work achieved and planned. During the past year the group has been concerned with supplying Scriptures to young recruits in the army, to foreign students in Austria, and at youth festivals. A "Bible table" has also been manned at various youth camps and conferences. On the international level the group has been represented at Bible Society gatherings in England, Germany and at the U.B.S. conference in France (Grenoble).

For the future the group will continue the above activities, and plans some new projects : provision of Scriptures to students in "underdeveloped" countries ; the making of a short film, *Youth and Bible distribution in Austria* ; the regular supply to the religious press of information regarding Scripture distribution in Austria and abroad ; the production of a regular information sheet about the work of the Austrian Bible Committee for youth camps and holiday courses.

Belgium

The *Belgian Bible Society* has recently issued four four-page leaflets for free distribution by their colporteurs. The first page is a photographic reproduction of the front and back cover of a Bible. Inside, each leaflet shows a facsimile of a page from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament. The back page gives information about the Society's editions of the Bible, prices and the address to which orders may be sent.

From the inside, as the Rev. W. Lutjeharms, Associate General Secretary of the B.B.S. writes, "people can see that both Old and New

Testaments treat the same subject: the love of God towards mankind. They will perhaps become more interested in this wonderful Book so that they desire to read other pages too". The pages selected for the facsimiles of the four leaflets are the following:

I	Genesis	1	The Creation
	Luke	2	The Birth of Jesus
II	Exodus	20	The Ten Commandments
	I John	1	Confession of Sin
III	Isaiah	53	The Suffering Servant
	John	3	Redemption through God's Son
IV	Psalm	23	The Lord is my Shepherd
	John	10	The Good Shepherd

These leaflets are to be used particularly in homes where no copy of the Scriptures can be sold, as a "silent witness" and a reminder of the colporteur's visit.

*

Pastors working in the region between Brussels and Namur have decided to divide the areas for which they are responsible into small sectors, where members of their congregations can go in teams to do colportage work. Between September and January the Belgian Bible Society are sending a representative weekly for two consecutive months to two centres, Wavre and Gembloux, to give a series of eight lessons to these voluntary colporteurs.

Brazil

The *Bible Society of Brazil* has been concerned for a number of years now with the need to supply the indigenous tribes of the country with copies of the Scriptures in their own language. In most cases no translation yet exists and the language itself must first be reduced to writing. Earlier this year the Executive of the B.S.B. went more thoroughly into the whole question and passed a resolution at its meeting in June recommending that "whereas the Bible Society of Brazil does not have on its permanent Revision and Consultation Committee the necessary personnel to attend to the need of providing the sacred Scriptures in the languages of the indigenous tribes of Brazil . . . .such aid be requested from the Translations Departments of the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society as the latter Societies may find it convenient and possible to supply in this connection".

Canada

The *Canadian Bible Society* reports the opening of four new Bible Houses in recent years. Three years ago a Bible House was completed in Regina, South Saskatchewan. By May this year all debts incurred for that building had been completely covered. In Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island District, the old rented premises have recently been replaced by a house belonging to the Society, part of which is rented to other organisations. On November 1st the West Ontario District, too, is to have its own Bible House in London instead of its present rented premises. Finally, in Calgary (South Alberta) the Bible House built in 1926 has been reconditioned and considerably enlarged during the summer. It is the first Bible House in Canada to bear the new name of the Society, inscribed in stone over the entrance.

Colombia

A city-wide Scripture distribution campaign, lasting about a week, took place in June in Girardot, a city on the Magdolina River about 90 miles from Bogota, with a population of some 45,000. The Rev. A. Porras, Bible Society Associate Secretary in Colombia, a graduate of the Penzotti Institute, was responsible for its organisation. The campaign coincided with the celebration of the second anniversary of the new Pres-

byterian Church in the city. The Rev. K. Bystrom, Bible Society Secretary for Venezuela and Colombia, who took part in the campaign, writes :

"Tuesday, June 14, was given over entirely to a study of the special booklet which Mr. Porras had prepared on distribution and evangelism. On Wednesday we met at the church at 8.30 a.m. to go out by twos, visiting different sectors of the city. The jeep was put to good use by transporting folk from the more distant areas in the city. The general idea was to keep the emphasis on evangelism while using the Scriptures as an evangelistic tool. Invitations to the evening services were also given out in the homes visited".

A total of 4,426 Scriptures were distributed and 58 volunteer workers participated. Prayer groups supported this campaign and Scriptures were read in every home visited. Where Scriptures were not purchased, a portion of the Word, in the form of a Gospel booklet, was left at the home. Mr. Bystrom also tells of an incident where 12 or 15 children came to volunteer their services for distribution. He writes : "We did not feel we should send them out to try to sell Bibles, but at the same time did not wish to discourage them in their offer to help. Mr. Porras and I loaded them into the jeep and took them to a poorer section of the city, assigned them two each to a different city block and gave them a quantity of small Gospel portions to distribute free in the home. They were thrilled to have had a part in the seed sowing and we trust that much of their seed fell on good ground".

Congo

The Rev. R. V. Emery, who went last spring to Léopoldville to look after Bible Society interests there whilst the Secretary, the Rev. A. W. Marthinson returned to Europe on furlough, wrote at the end of August that the work is continuing without undue hindrance. Consignments of Scriptures have been received as usual. This is the first time that a member of the Home Staff has been sent to a foreign agency to carry on Bible Society work during the furlough of the Secretary. Usually a local missionary is asked to give some of his time to the work. In the circumstances, the presence of an experienced full-time worker has been of the greatest importance for the maintenance of the work in Congo. Before joining the B.F.B.S. in 1953 as a Regional Secretary in Eastern England, Mr. Emery was a missionary in Pakistan.

Work is also going on at Leco, the missionary printing plant where some of the portions for the Congo are printed.

Cuba

A missionary organisation called the Great Commission Hour is engaged in a million Gospel distribution crusade all over Cuba. By July the Bible Society in Cuba had already supplied about a third of the Scriptures needed. The campaign is carried on mainly through the churches and is supported by the World Gospel Crusade. Writing on the campaign, Dr. J. G. Molina, Bible Society Secretary in Cuba, reports the following incident :

In Holguin, an important city in the province of Oriente, together with a group of young women and ministers, I visited the hospital, where we distributed 650 Gospels among the patients, staff and visitors. We had been given permission to make this visit outside the normal visiting hours. Going from bed to bed we distributed the Book in the various wards. Before leaving each ward, I said a few words urging the people to read the Book, and finished with a prayer. The patients always echoed the

"Amen" and their faces reflected the joy that had been taken to them. When we had finished our distribution I had the pleasure of going round the wards again and seeing all except the seriously ill reading the Book. Those who could not read for themselves were listening as a visiting friend read to them. Many people expressed their gratitude to me. The first person to receive a Gospel had been the Medical Director of the hospital, and he bade me a very friendly farewell at the end of our visit. He was full of praise for the work we had done, and assured us that the doors of the hospital would always be open to us whenever we wanted to make another visit.

*

It has been reported in the press that the Cuban Government has authorised the World Home Bible League, another evangelistic organisation which has been working for several years in Cuba, to import 20,000 New Testaments for its work. In the course of six years the League distributed, through some 350 pastors with whom it is in contact, about 60,000 New Testaments and 50,000 portions.

*

In the last ten years the Bible Society in Cuba has circulated an average of 16,000 Bibles, 23,500 New Testaments and 300,000 Portions yearly. These figures include the supplies mentioned above to the Great Commission Hour. Circulation in 1959 was about double the figure of 1949 : Bibles—26,216 against 12,206 ; New Testaments—37,486 against 19,920 ; Portions—414,353 against 212,131.

England

The Scripture Gift Mission is moving back this autumn to the site of its former headquarters, Eccleston Hall. A new building, Radstock House, has taken the place of the Hall which had to be pulled down after the fire of April, 1956. Lord Radstock had founded the original trust in 1884 and built Eccleston Hall as an evangelistic centre.

The Scripture Gift Mission reports the following circulation of Scriptures for 1959 :

Bibles	20,363
New Testaments	94,137
Gospels and other complete books of the Bible	1,001,000
Scripture Handbooks ..	718,599
Booklets setting forth the way of Salvation ..	3,626,294
Bible portions and text cards	5,443,644
Text posters	42,279
	10,946,316

Of these over 8,170,000 were circulated as grants. The remainder were distributed as part grants, or sold. The Navy and Military Bible Society, which was founded in 1780 and later became part of the Scripture Gift Mission, accounted for 176,731 copies in the grand total. Free grants were made to 14,375 missionaries and other Christian workers for distribution in 183 countries and islands and in 225 languages.

France

The French Bible Committee has issued the first of a planned series of booklets containing study notes for a correspondence course on the Gospel of Mark.

The 16-page booklet begins with brief notes on the treasures which the Bible contains and on the place of a Gospel in it. These are followed by suggestions on how to proceed with the study, points for meditation and indication on how to reply to the questions.

(For each passage under consideration points for meditation are suggested by the following questions: Does this passage depict an example

to follow, or not to follow? Does it contain a prayer which I can make my own? Does it provide a promise which I can claim by faith for myself? Does it teach me something new about the person and work of Jesus Christ?)

Then comes some factual information, geographical, historical and textual, on the Gospel of Mark. The study of each passage is divided into three sections—reflections on the passage, an introduction to the text and a vocabulary explaining the significance, in the setting in which the Scripture was written, of the terms used in the passage.

The whole of St. Mark's Gospel is divided into five studies. The first, which is the only one contained in this booklet, covers in two lessons the first chapter of Mark, verses 1-13, under the title : The Mission of John the Baptist—(*a*) John the Baptist ; (*b*) The Baptism and Temptations of Jesus. Three questions are asked : What is the role of John the Baptist ? What is then the essence of the message of John the Baptist ? Why was Jesus baptised ?

The second study outline is sent out by the French Bible Committee on receipt of replies to the questions contained in the first, and of payment of NF 1.

Germany

In collaboration with the Bethel Mission and with support from the Badische Bible Society, the *Stuttgart Bible Society* has recently published a second edition of 10,000 copies of a picture Bible in Swahili, with pictures by Schnorr von Carolsfeld. They have been sent to the mission field in East Africa.

The Stuttgart Bible Society's new lectern Bible (see Bulletin 42, p.72) was chosen as one of the 50 best produced books of 1959, by the panel of judges of "The best German books".

The 24th edition of the Nestle Greek New Testament has been published by the Stuttgart Bible Society, edited by Dr. Erwin Nestle and Professor D. Aland. This edition contains a large number of improvements and supplementary information over previous editions, use having been made in particular of the Dead Sea scrolls, of the Papyrus Bodmer II and Papyrus Bodmer VIII and VII. Professor Aland is now preparing the 25th edition which will again involve considerable changes. The text is to be re-set, and will reflect some of the new insight gained through recent discoveries into the original text. The apparatus is also to undergo a considerable number of changes : all the readings which Nestle had quoted from previous initial editions of the Greek text are to be checked against the original and a number of mistakes thus corrected. It had been hoped that the new edition, for which new type is also being chosen, would be ready for the celebration in 1962 of the Third Jubilee of the Stuttgart Bible Society. It is now clear that this will not be possible. Professor Aland is also a member of an international committee sponsored by the American Bible Society, the National Bible Society of Scotland and the Stuttgart Bible Society at present working on a complete revision of the original Greek text of the New Testament. The new Stuttgart edition is also to embody the findings of the committee.

During the period May to September Professor Dr. Claus Westermann of Heidelberg University gave a series of 20 talks over the South German radio on the theme : The Controversial Bible. These lectures met with considerable interest. Many youth and adult groups in the churches

used the talks for their own discussion programmes. Prof. Westermann took up the many questions which arise from the new discoveries of biblical texts and the recent studies of biblical manuscripts. He dealt with them by trying to examine the Bible critically as if it were a historical document, and from that point of view to justify the claim that the Bible is truly the book which reveals the history of God's dealings with men.

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Four hundred enquiries followed a morning five-minute religious talk on North West German radio last June, in which the importance of the reading and study of the Bible was stressed. Most of the letters were requesting advice on how to set about reading the Bible. The committee for Bible Mission is in close touch with the Rev. H. J. Quest who was in charge of the service that day.

*

The Altenburg Bibelanstalt have recently published the first pocket New Testament in the new revised text. Production of this really "pocket sized" Testament (measuring 7cm × 11cm and only 1cm thick) is also planned by the Lutherisches Verlagshaus in Berlin.

*

On the invitation of Pastor Altpeter of the Ev. Jugend Akademie in Hanover and Pastor Fisch of the Lübeck Bible Society, a German-speaking Bible Society Youth Conference was held for 10 days during the summer in Hemeln, near Göttingen. It was the first gathering of this kind to be held on German soil, and was under the leadership of Mr. Karl Uhl, Director of the Austrian Bible Committee, assisted by Mr. van Holst Pellekaan, Youth Secretary of the Netherlands Bible Society. Over 50 young people representing 13 (mainly European) nationalities came together for recreational fellowship and serious study. The Belgian, Norwegian and Swiss groups included young secretaries from the Bible Society headquarters.

Each day there were morning and evening prayers, and group Bible study on the general theme "The Covenant of God in His Word". The subjects treated during the conference by the distinguished lecturers included "The Way of the Bible in the World of the Old and New Testaments" by Professor Dr. Galling and Professor Jeremias of Göttingen University ; "The Bible in the Roman Catholic Church" by Fr. Höslinger of Klosterneuburg (Austria) ; "The Bible in the non-Christian World" by Dr. Nietzold of the Leipzig Mission assisted by an African from Tanganyika.

The programme also included talks on Bible Society work in the world (Mr. Karl Uhl), in Germany (Pastor R. Steiner, General Secretary of the Union of Evangelical Bible Societies); an evening of reports on the work in various countries by the young people themselves ; a critical review of the subject of Bible Illustration presented by means of film slides by the N.B.S.; films ; excursions ; social evenings.

Two encouraging features of the conference were the way in which the young people took active part in the discussions, and the decision of the delegates from Germany, following the example of the Youth Groups in Austria and Holland, to collect money to pay for the printing of a Gospel of John in *Masana* (a Cameroun language) in support of the "Million Gospel Campaign" for Africa.

Haiti

The first copies of the new Haitian Creole New Testament arrived from New York in Port-au-Prince at the end of July. A special dedication service is being planned for early in the autumn, when the books will be presented to the people of Haiti.

In one week the whole paper-back edition (2,500) were sold. An edition of 30,000 is now in the press. A special dedication service is being planned for early in the autumn when a specially bound copy will be presented to the President of the Republic of Haiti.

India

A recent "Monthly Letter About Evangelism" issued by the World Council of Churches is devoted to a description of evangelism in Indian villages. It describes the visit of a team of Bible women to a typical village in South India. A woman missionary and her three companions stay in the village for a week and during that time "visit the Christian homes every day and try to give personal help and teaching to each family. They sell Bibles, New Testaments, Gospels, hymn books and other Christian literature to the Christians, to the Hindu children who attend the school and to the Hindus whose homes they visit and to whom they preach the Gospel . . . .Every day they will teach the children and the women and probably on Sunday the teacher will ask them to conduct worship for the whole congregation . . . Over the two or three years they have been visiting the village a real friendship has been established and (the people) look forward to the Bible women's visits". The article is written by Sister Eileen Bending of the Bayalaseema Diocese of the Church of South India and makes frequent reference to the important place the Bible plays in village evangelism.

1960 has seen two important centenaries in the sphere of Bible translation in India. One has been celebrated by the estimated 1,200,000 Christians of the Church in Andhra Pradesh—the first publication of the *Telugu* Bible in Madras, at the very time when thousands were being added to the church as a result of the large scale group movements which followed the baptism of the robber Venkayya in 1859.

There is no great indigenous church to celebrate the second centenary—that of the first publication of any part of the Bible into *Tibetan*, a harmony of Gospels—but it has served as a quiet reminder to the *Bible Society of India and Ceylon* of their missionary task as outlined in the Society's constitution : "to encourage the wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures . . . . .throughout India and Ceylon and *so far as possible in other lands*".

The Society's Translations Adviser, the Rev. W. J. Culshaw, tells something of the history of these translations :

The publication of the Bible in Telugu could not have been achieved without the devoted labours of those who in previous years had given their time to Bible translation, although few saw the completion of their work. Benjamin Schultze, the Tranquebar missionary who completed Ziegenbalg's translation of the Old Testament into Tamil, is said to have completed a Telugu translation by 1732, but nothing of his translation was ever published and mystery surrounds the fate of his manuscripts. Captain Dodds, a Scots officer in the service of the East India Company wrote to his mother in 1795 that he was postponing his leave in order to continue with the translation of the Scriptures into Telugu ; but within a week the young officer had died and nothing further is known of his Telugu translations.

Telugu is probably unique among Indian languages in that two separate translations of the New Testament, undertaken independently of each other, were published in the same year, 1818. One was the second Serampore version—the manuscript

and type of the first had been destroyed in the great fire of 1812—and the other the Madras version, begun by two L.M.S. missionaries, George Cran and Augustus Desgranges in 1804, and completed by their successors. Subsequent work was based on this latter version and the whole Bible was published in 1860. Many changes have been made in the language during the past hundred years, but the fact that one version continues to be of service to so many Christians, spread over so large an area and belonging to many diverse traditions, is a great tribute to the early translators.

Although there were sporadic contacts between Christian missionaries and the land of Tibet, the country succeeded in resisting the political, economic and cultural contacts which profoundly affected many parts of Asia during the period of west European expansion. Now some of the barriers have been flung down while others have been erected. Communism has reached Tibet from Asia and although the outlook is not favourable, it may well be that the religion of Jesus Christ will reach there through Asian agencies.

Before that day comes, we recall the heroism of the pioneer Moravian missionaries, who settled in Lahoul in days before frontiers were demarcated, and later removed to Leh, where a Tibetan-speaking Christian Church is part of the fruit of their labours. The first translator was H. A. Jäschke, who also compiled the first Tibetan-English dictionary. He was a master of classical Tibetan and all later revisions have been based on his work. The story of how the first complete Tibetan Bible was printed in Lahore in 1948, amid all the difficulties caused by Partition, has contributed a glorious chapter to Church history in India and Pakistan. Distribution has always been a difficulty ; the two chief centres in India have been Leh and the Darjeeling District, where in Kalimpong there is another Tibetan speaking Church. Over the years, many copies have crossed the border into Tibet in the hands of traders and lamas, but that way is now blocked. When a brighter day dawns, we shall perhaps be able to add a new chapter to the romantic story of Scripture distribution.

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"We have noticed a marked increase in sales of Gospels in the villages", says a member of The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM) working in India. "Previously we could sell very few in our district because almost no one could read. but this season we sold about ten times the usual number. This means two things : 1. Our village schools and others are effective ; young people are becoming literate. 2. We must increase our literature distribution tenfold."

Italy

The Freundes Dienst (Service of Friendship), a Swiss evangelistic organisation with branches in several countries, which specialises in the distribution of Gospel vouchers, reports that an average of 500 vouchers a month are being returned to their representative in South Italy with the request for a free Gospel.

Japan

The work of the *Japan Bible Society* in Hokkaido is to focus on a second seven-year systematic visitation by colportage of the entire island. The first phase was begun in Kushiro at the beginning of June. An effort is being made to work with the local pastors, to encourage them to help their members individually and informally to distribute Portions and Testaments to their friends and neighbours. It is hoped that the fact that one-third of the Members

of Parliament in Hokkaido are Christians will prove advantageous for the campaign.

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The new Reference Bible on which the Japan Bible Society has been working for some time was to be published in October.

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Building on the new Bible House at Osaka began on August 1st and is due to be completed by the end of January 1961. The cost is estimated at Y10,000,000 (£10,000).

Korea

To commemorate the distribution of 30,000,000 Scriptures since the beginning of work in Korea in 1893, the *Korean Bible Society* produced an ad hoc coloured poster. During a special sales project for a month earlier this year, all copies of Scripture sold had a small ticket attached inside the cover. At the end of the period the purchaser of the 30,000,000th copy was announced through the radio and newspapers and he was presented with a leather-bound Bible with gold edges.

However, the Associate Secretary of the Society, the Rev. C. R. Kenyon, points out that although this figure of 30 million also corresponds to the figure for the population of Korea, the goal of Scripture distribution is by no means achieved. "These thirty million copies", he writes, "include only about half a million full Bibles and slightly over three and a half million New Testaments. When only one book of the Bible has been placed in a man's hands, that is just a beginning. And again, of these 30 million, only about 10 million have been distributed during the last 20 years, which is during the lifetime of the majority of the people . . . . .There is a great unfinished task here before every Korean family has even a single Scripture portion in their possession."

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Colporteurs' sales have been "greatly affected or handicapped" after the political upheaval and the controversies which have been raging in certain sections of the Church in Korea, writes the Rev. Y. B. Im, General Secretary of the Korean Bible Society. This became clear at a colporteurs' conference held in Seoul in June. Nevertheless the Bible Society received more than 78 applications in response to advertisements announcing that the Society wished to recruit new colporteurs. The candidates took an examination and 32 of them were found suitable. They are now all working on probation for three months ; their minimum monthly sales must pass the 1,500 mark.

Mexico

During the summer Dr. S. F. Nelson has been conducting an experimental 12-week Penzotti Institute course in Mexico. Six students have enrolled ; two of them being agency promoters and four representatives of the churches. Dr. Nelson writes : "We are bringing much of the course directly to the churches. The week of June 13-19 we went to two cities north east of Mexico City and held Institutes with the pastors and laymen of the churches. A total of fifteen churches and their pastors participated in the Institutes. In addition we had conferences with several hundred laymen in the evening sessions in the churches." Over the weekend of July 4 an Institute was held in Zitacuaro, where approximately 350 laymen and 125 young people participated in the Training Institute. Dr. Nelson continues : "In these Institutes we seek to give instruction in how to set up a programme of organised distribution, how to train volunteers, including actual demonstrations of distribution techniques and follow-up methods. We have been receiving a very fine response everywhere we have gone".

Dr. Nelson is pleased with the progress made in this new form of the Penzotti Institute.

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Work on a new Spanish translation is to start in Mexico in the autumn. Professor Dr. Baez-Camargo and Mr. A. Lloreda will be the chief translators. They will be helped by an Editorial Committee of about ten members and a Consultative Committee of about 25 members. The project is sponsored by the A.B.S. and the B.F.B.S. It had been envisaged as long as 10 years ago, but was postponed in order to permit the completion of the Reina de Valera revison which has now been published.

The new project implies a completely new translation in up-to-date Spanish based upon a critical edition of the original text. It is particularly designed to meet the needs of pastors, seminary students and the better educated laity who want a text as close to the original as possible.

Dr. Baez-Camargo is Secretary of Literature on the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America. He is also professor of Christian Literature and Journalism and of History of Protestantism in the Latin American Union Theological Seminary, Mexico City. Mr. A. Lloreda has just completed two years of advanced study at Drew Theological Seminary in preparation for this work.

Scotland

The *National Bible Society of Scotland* has agreed to make a grant of £250 from its Ter-Jubilee Fund towards the publication of the Psalter in Xhosa, for use by the Free Church Missions in South Africa and by a branch of the Reformed Church in Holland in the new mission stations which they are opening in Cape Province and the Transkei.

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Last June the Rev. J. M. Alexander, General Secretary of the N.B.S.S., dedicated a new van for the use of the Scottish Colportage Society, to whose work the N.B.S.S. makes a substantial grant. Nine students from the Bible Training Institute in Glasgow have been working with the van through the summer in the western and southern counties of Scotland. The permanent colporteurs will also be taking the van to some of the remoter parts of Scotland, including the Western Isles.

The United States of America

The American Bible Society, which this year observes the 125th anniversary of its work for the blind, reports a record breaking year of Scripture distribution to both sighted and sightless. The total distribution for 1959 amounted to 17,650,917 volumes, the average annual distribution for the previous six years having been 15 million.

Distribution to the blind, including Scriptures in Braille, in other embossed printing systems and Talking Book records, totalled 73,194.

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767,000 copies of the July/August issue of the *Bible Society Record* were printed this year. Two years ago the same issue had a circulation of 502,000 copies.

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The following is a report received recently in New York on the work of Carl W. Larson. Mr. Larson is the Study Secretary for the U.S.A. on the Place and Use of the Bible in the Life of the Churches :

The Study of Bible Use in the United States has three basic aims :

1. To seek the facts—the gathering of methods, experiences and conditions leading to effective Bible use in the churches through case study documents. Specific emphasis is placed upon the layman's evaluation as to the relevancy of the Scriptures for the age in which we live as presen-

ted through the function of the church in worship, fellowship, evangelism, etc.

2. To study the facts so as to "determine patterns and conditions of the use of the Bible that are particularly fruitful in the development of the full Christian life in the churches and individuals".

3. To promote as widely as possible, ways of improving the use of the Bible. The progress report of Secretary Larson reveals three main areas of operation :

(*a*) Case studies of local churches now number 183, and a good majority appear to have some creative and dynamic use of the Bible functioning in the life of the church. The various experiments or experiences of these churches can be exceedingly valuable to the other churches throughout their particular denomination. Methods of communicating these techniques are now under consideration by the Study Secretary and denominational consultants.

(*b*) City and state survey by use of questionnaire relating to Bible use. A statewide study of the Bible in Ohio has already produced some very interesting results, although with only one-fifth of the questionnaires returned no final statement can as yet be made.

(*c*) The Buffalo Bible Study Week—May 1-6—has been one of the major emphases of the Study this year. The results were most encouraging. Approximately 1,000 laymen came together for study each evening from Sunday to Friday. (see Bulletin No 43, p. 121.).

It is now our hope that adaptations of Bible Week may also be made to denominational groups and within local churches. One denominational youth group will use the technique for a week of Bible Study throughout the entire denomination.

Future plans call for the preparation of documents for participating churches, the establishment of additional Case Studies in the deep South and Northwestern areas of the United States and discussion sessions of leaders of participating denominations and churches.

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One million 40-page Christmas portions (the Christmas story) in large type Spanish have been printed in the U.S.A. for distribution at the Christmas season in Latin America. The A.B.S. is expecting to distribute nearly 10 million of the same portion in English in the U.S.A. More than half of them will probably go to patients in hospitals, prisoners in all types of penal institutions, the homeless in rescue missions, guests in Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. hostels, etc.

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The American University in Washington D.C. has received a grant of $174,700 for the purpose of establishing a pioneer distribution project in the field of religious and educational television. The grant will be used to achieve national and international distribution of films to be made of the college-accredited Bible courses, which have been sponsored by the University on a Washington television station for the past two years. The grant will also be used for live presentations of the courses. The Bible courses are taught on television during the University's autumn and winter semesters by Dr. Edward W. Bauman, associate professor of religion at the American University. They are "The Life and Teaching of Jesus" and "An Introduction to the Old Testament". Since the Bible telecourse began in 1958 as a weekly one hour programme, it has received several national awards, and each programme is watched by approximately 90,000 people in the Washington area alone.

U.S.S.R.

For the first time since the war the New Testament and Psalms have been published in Latvia, with the permission of the Government. The text is apparently a slight revision of the old translation.

Miscellaneous

At a consultation on evangelism, held at the Ecumenical Institute, Geneva, and sponsored by the World Council of Churches, Billy Graham said that a return to "dynamic, vital New Testament evangelism" is the solution to the problem of "an anaemic Christianity and a loss of spiritual strength on the part of the churches". "I am convinced", said Dr. Graham, "that the Gospel of Christ is the only answer to the rising tide of atheistic dialectical materialism".

The theme of the consultation was "The Relation of Revival Within the Church and the Communication of the Gospel to the Outsider".

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The former Bible Lands Agencies North and South, jointly sponsored by the American Bible Society and British and Foreign Bible Society since 1937, have undergone an administrative reorganisation. The two Societies have agreed on the following policy :

The work will continue to be supported equally by both Societies ; The B.F.B.S. will assume administrative responsibility for Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Israel, Sudan, Ethiopia ; and the A.B.S. will administer the Lebanon, Irak, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Arabian Gulf.

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The Gideons International is an Association of Christian professional and business men who have as their object bringing others to the Lord Jesus Christ, through their own personal witness, and through placing the Bible—God's Holy Word—in hotel bedrooms and prison cells, New Testaments alongside beds in hospitals and through giving New Testaments to school children.

The organisation started in 1898 as an Association to provide Christian fellowship for Christian business men away from home. The placing of Scriptures in hotels, hospitals, etc., started ten years later in 1908 and a total of 45 million Scriptures is reported to have been circulated to date. There are about 26,000 Gideons operating in 54 countries.

Personalia

Miss Alice E. Ball has been appointed an Assistant Secretary in the Overseas Department of the American Bible Society, with special administrative responsibilities for the work in the Caribbean (Mexico, Central America, Guatemala, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Haiti).

Miss Weir Spence has been appointed as a Special Assistant in the Overseas Department of the American Bible Society. She will serve as an advisor on all questions relating to the production of Scriptures overseas and as a liaison between the Distribution Departments in matters relating to the preparation of Scriptures for publication in the U.S.A.

The **U.B.S. Officers** and **Standing Committee** appointed at the last meeting of the Council (in Grenoble) were:

President:	The Bishop of Bradford
Vice-Presidents:	Bishop I. de los Reyes Dr. A. Rodriguez Hidalgo Sir Samuel Runganadhan Mr. Coleman Burke
Chairman of the Council:	Archdeacon H. M. Arrowsmith
Vice-Chairmen:	The Rev. Dr. L. E. Holmgren Dr. T. S. G. Mulia The Rev. Dr. W. J. Platt
Treasurers:	The Rt. Hon. Lord Luke of Pavenham Mr. C. W. Baas

Standing Committee:

Mr. F. L. S. F. Baron van Tuyll van Serooskerken (*Chairman*)
Archdeacon H. M. Arrowsmith (*Vice-Chairman*)
Rev. E. G. Alves
Dr. N. J. Cockburn
Rev. A. Hauge
Dr. L. E. Holmgren
Sir F. Ibiam
Rev. Y. B. Im
Mr. J. S. S. Malelu
Rev. R. Steiner
Rev. K. G. McMillan
Rev. T. Miyakoda
Dr. R. T. Taylor
Rev. J. T. Watson

Contributors to this issue

THE REV. P. CAUFRIEZ is General Secretary of the Belgian Bible Society.

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THE REV. C. R. KENYON is Deputy General Secretary of the Korean Bible Society.

THE REV. S. V. VINCENT is Secretary of the B.F.B.S. Agency in Burma.

MR. T. WILLIAMS is a member of a Mobile Unit Team working in South India.

DR. S. F. NELSON is Director of the Penzotti Institute, Mexico.

DR. I. H. NOTHDURFT is Secretary of the Joint Bible Society Agency in Argentina.

THE REV. L. A. GIRALDI is Colportage Secretary of the Bible Society of Brazil.

THE REV. DR. W. J. PLATT is Consultant General Secretary of the British & Foreign Bible Society.